



## Portugal—Right-wing Offensive in SP

By Gerry Foley

Ever since the Socialist party assumed the main political responsibility for capitalist stability in Portugal in September 1975, a conflict has been brewing between the Soares leadership and militant workers in the SP ranks.

This conflict took an acute form when a large part of the SP refused to go along with the leadership's decision to support General Ramalho Eanes in the June presidential elections. Repudiation of the right-wing general was so open and widespread in the SP ranks that it was clear the party was in for a crisis after the elections. Local SP activists threatened that Soares was in for a hard time at the coming party congress.

A few days before the SP congress was scheduled to open on October 31, the right apparently moved first, opening up a campaign to isolate opponents of the SP government's program of austerity before a discussion could begin.

"Crisis in the Socialist party?" the October 12 issue of the Lisbon daily *Jornal Novo* asked in a banner headline. In its center pages, it carried a statement from the Lisbon Area SP Federation, which made a spectacular charge:

"Since it is impossible to oust the government by a coup, and this clearly cannot be done by the electoral road either, we are seeing a step-up in maneuvers to accomplish this aim by working inside the Socialist party, which in the present conditions is the only way of impugning the government."

The communiqué did not, however, refer to any specific "maneuver." It mentioned only unspecified "attacks on those comrades in the government who have been firmest in defending democracy and the independent vision of the SP against all forms of putschism and totalitarianism." These attacks were said to come from elements who in the name of "real socialism" and "struggle against the right wing," were trying to revive Admiral Rosa Coutinho's proposal for a "real Socialist party."

The admiral floated this idea in the spring of 1975 when there was an acute conflict between the ruling Movimento das Forças Armadas (MFA—Armed Forces Movement) and its principal political ally at the time, the Communist party, on one side and the SP on the other. The implication of this phrase for SP members thus is a puppet party captive to a dictatorial bloc of the MFA and the CP, what the SP calls "Gonçalvismo," after former Premier Vas-

co Gonçalves.

In view of the intense experiences the SP membership passed through in mass mobilizations against the MFA governments allied with the Stalinists, the charge that a "Gonçalvista"-type plot to split the party was in progress could be expected to evoke the maximum emotional response.

In the October 13 issue of *Jornal Novo*, spokesman for the leading political circles of Portuguese capitalism, editor Proença de Carvalho, presented his view of what the crisis in the SP meant: "In the present political circumstances, it would be extremely dangerous for the stabilization of democratic life if the government party did not remain cohesive." But he did not refer to any attack by "putschists of the left." Rather, he stressed that the time had come for the SP leadership to put its house in order, to ease out the leftist elements who were needed to mobilize mass support in the fight against Gonçalves but proved an obstacle to running a "responsible" government:

"The SP is in the government, but it does not have a parliamentary majority. The country is caught in an acute economic crisis. The state apparatus has shown itself to be paralyzed. Education is in chaos. In the labor movement, grave disturbances and confusions persist. . . .

"To overcome the crisis and consolidate the democratic state, we need a government with very clear ideas, precise objectives, and a policy realistic enough to win a broad base of support.

"This government is trying to be one of unity rather than coalition.

"It would be tragic if this represented a precarious coalition within the SP.

"However, it seems obvious to us that there are within the government irreconcilably opposed forms of interpreting reality and responding to it.

"As head of government, Mário Soares has already demonstrated lucidity and pragmatism in attacking the problems in accordance with the facts and not with ideological recipes.

"On the other hand, some members of his cabinet remain deaf and blind to the surrounding reality, determined to apply—'before it is too late'—their preconceived notions. . . .

"So, the SP must calmly take stock of itself, and take a look at some contradictions which while natural in a democratic party can, when reflected at the governmental level, undermine the regime's effectiveness."

Proença de Carvalho could offer some

experience in judging the time for a crack-down on the left elements in the forces that opposed the Gonçalves governments. During the summer 1975 crisis, when the government and most of the press were closely allied with the CP, the Confederação da Indústria Portuguesa (CIP—Confederation of Portuguese Industry) entrusted *Jornal Novo* to a left Social Democratic editor, Artur Portela Filho. When the right went on the offensive after the failure of the November 25 Gonçalvista putsch, Portela Filho was dumped in favor of Proença de Carvalho.

The current editor of *Jornal Novo*, however, was more than disingenuous when he expressed his hope that the "all-SP" government defended by Soares would really be homogeneous. His paper follows the line of the main bourgeois party, the Partido Social Democrata (PSD—Social Democratic party, formerly the Partido Popular Democrático—PPD). Thus it opposed the proposal of an all-SP government that would expose Soares to the pressures of the left in his party. It wanted a "democratic coalition" of the SP and the PSD.

The formula of an all-SP government was two sided. On the one hand, it represented the SP leadership's determination to isolate the CP, consolidate the split in the working class, and monopolize the role of the bourgeoisie's agent in the working class. On the other, it reflected Soares's realization that an open alliance with the bourgeois parties was not yet possible.

The cabinet based on this formula included elements that looked openly to the right, such as the minister of education, Sottomayor Cardia, and the minister of information, Manuel Alegre, as well as figures that sought support from the left, such as the minister of agriculture, Lopes Cardoso. The latter is really just the left face of the SP leadership, but, in that position, he is the target of attacks aimed at the left in general.

If anyone is under attack in the SP government, it is Lopes Cardoso. He has been denounced repeatedly by mobilizations of reactionary farmers demanding an end to the agrarian reform. And there has been a new upsurge of this rightist agitation in the last weeks.

The Lisbon SP communiqué presented Manuel Alegre as the target of an assault by left putschists. In fact, Alegre launched an offensive against the left in a speech October 4 commemorating the establishment of the republic, in which he said that the fall of the first parliamentary regime was due to "left extremists converging with rightists." This speech was played up in an editorial by *Jornal Novo's* deputy editor, Torquato da Luz.

Following the publication of the Lisbon SP statement, *Jornal Novo* went on a campaign against the alleged threat from the left to the unity of Soares's party. In an editorial October 13, Proença de Carvalho

described the source of the danger as "Meloantunismo," said to be a form of "left putschism" represented by Melo Antunes, leader of the "Group of the Nine" in the MFA, which defeated the Gonçalves faction and ended the special alliance with the CP.

This current was supposed to bring together "Communists, independent leftists, and left fringes of the SP." It was supposed to be seeking "socialism not by the electoral road, but by the revolutionary one, through a vanguard that in the Portuguese case can be only military." Its immediate objective was to replace the present government with a "big left front."

With the gains of the workers under attack by the Soares government and the bosses, there has been a strong tendency for SP unionists and those sections of the party leadership closest to the masses to be pushed into a common front with supporters of other working-class parties in opposition to the SP government's measures. This trend toward a "big left front" is obviously what is worrying *Jornal Novo's* editors and the bourgeois forces they represent.

The crisis that came out into the open in the SP on October 14 when the National Secretariat of the party issued a communiqué referring for the first time to specific differences did not involve any military faction. What brought the explosion was the decision of the SP Lisbon Labor Commission to support a demonstration by the teachers union against cut-backs ordered by Sottomayor Cardia.

What is happening is that the contradictions between the aspirations of militant layers attracted to the SP in its fight with the CP-supported military governments and the procapitalist orientation of the SP leadership are beginning to explode.

With the support of the Portuguese capitalists, the SP leadership is launching an operation to break those sectors in their own party most responsive to the demands of the masses. And the extent and violence of the campaign in the bourgeois press against the SP left indicates that the capitalists think they have a vital interest at stake. □

### Who Else Could It Be?

Faced with a recent wave of prison rebellions, Canadian Solicitor General Francis Fox acted with determination. He warned October 8 that further rebellions would be stamped out immediately, and he announced a police inquiry into charges that the prison revolts had been organized by "outside agitators."

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## Mass Rallies Staged to Celebrate Fall of Chiang Ch'ing

By Les Evans

The Chinese government officially confirmed on October 22 the purge of four top Maoist leaders, including Mao's widow, Chiang Ch'ing, as well as the appointment of Hua Kuo-feng as chairman of the Chinese Communist party. The announcement, made by the government press agency Hsinhua, came in the midst of party-organized demonstrations throughout the country that were the largest since the Cultural Revolution of the late 1960's.

The press statement offered no specific allegations against the jailed leaders, but accused them in general of trying to "usurp party and state power." It said that "the party Central Committee headed by Chairman Hua Kuo-feng adopted resolute and decisive measures to crush the counterrevolutionary conspiratorial clique and liquidate a bane inside the party."

The four—who besides Chiang Ch'ing include Wang Hung-wen, the party's second-ranking official; Chang Ch'un-ch'iao, senior deputy prime minister and chief army political commissar; and Yao Wen-yuan, the reputed head of the government press department—were said to have "wantonly tampered with Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tse-tung Thought" and having "opposed Chairman Mao's proletarian revolutionary line on a series of domestic and international questions."

The press accused the "gang of four" of tampering with Mao's last directives. No proofs were offered of this or any other charges, while the press produces almost on a daily basis "new" directives by the dead Mao calling for support to Hua Kuo-feng and warning of a possible usurpation of power by his wife, Chiang Ch'ing. No evidence is offered for the existence of these deathbed utterances. Nor has there been any public discussion of the policies of the new regime.

In the guise of reporting comments by workers and peasants, the Chinese press is continuing to whip up a lynch atmosphere against the fallen Maoists. Workers at the Shanghai Steel Plant No. 1 were quoted on October 22 as saying that Chiang Ch'ing and her associates had "become something filthy and contemptible like dog's dung."

Using the ritual Stalinist slander employed by Mao and Chiang Ch'ing herself against Mao's factional opponents in the Cultural Revolution, the government adds to its list of charges the claim that Chiang Ch'ing sought to restore capitalism in China. The October 22 Hsinhua dispatch quoted demonstrators as saying that the "gang of four" were "typical representa-



Der Spiegel

HUA KUO-FENG

tives of the bourgeoisie inside the party and the unrepentant capitalist roaders who were still on the capitalist road."

No attempt is made to explain how Mao Tsetung could have been married to a bourgeois plotter for almost forty years, elevated her to central party leadership for the last decade, and never detected her alleged political leanings. (Chiang Ch'ing is even described as a "fascist" in one press report, cited in the October 24 *New York Times*.)

Ten days of nationwide demonstrations, organized by the Communist party, celebrated the downfall of the Chiang Ch'ing group and hailed the appointment of Hua Kuo-feng to the party chairmanship. These began on October 15 in Shanghai, where Chang Ch'un-ch'iao, Yao Wen-yuan, and Wang Hung-wen were top officials of the city government. The first crowds of 10,000 or more were soon dwarfed by rallies of a million or more in Shanghai and Peking. The October 24 *New York Times* reported:

"Peking television showed the huge, often carnival-like demonstrations in the capital in unusual round-the-world broadcasts by satellite. The only other such broadcasts were the funerals of Chou Enlai and Mao Tse-tung this year. . . .

"Although the demonstrations over the last few days have clearly been organized, many participants appeared genuinely pleased. In Peking, marchers smiled and waved at foreigners, and even invited the children of foreign diplomats and reporters

to join in the demonstrations, an unusual gesture in a society where foreigners are kept at a discreet distance."

On October 24, coinciding with a rally of a million people in Peking where the new party leadership appeared on a reviewing stand, the government press agency issued the claim that 50 million people had taken part in anti-Chiang Ch'ing demonstrations throughout China in the previous four days.

Although the party apparatus controlled the slogans and the speakers, both the size and the mood at these massive rallies seemed to confirm that the deposed leaders were widely unpopular among the Chinese working class. Similar officially orchestrated demonstrations in April, for example, called to repudiate the April 5 spontaneous mass protest in Tien An Men Square and to sanction the dismissal of vice-premier Teng Hsiao-p'ing, were far smaller and were widely reported as dispirited, regimented affairs.

The Chinese Stalinists have, of course, for many years used the device of compulsory mass mobilizations as a form of plebiscite to give the appearance of a popular mandate to government policy. No debate is permitted in the mass meetings, no dissenters from the official line are allowed access to the press, and all critics of the current regime are habitually denounced as counterrevolutionaries.

This procedure is not, however, without its risks, especially when the central leadership is divided within itself. In the Cultural Revolution such controlled mobilizations swept beyond the limits prescribed by the Maoist hierarchy and led to large-scale strikes and factory occupations that were suppressed only by direct military intervention.

The new regime, ostensibly headed by the little-known Hua Kuo-feng, has won an easy victory over some of Mao's closest associates. But without Mao's personal authority it is safe to conclude that there will be uneasiness in Peking at the air of jubilation among the giant crowds celebrating the downfall of the best known and most hated representatives of the Stalinist ruling caste. This sentiment can quickly turn against the victors if they pursue the same policies, which they show every indication of doing, at least on essentials.

In foreign policy, the new leaders have already made clear their intention of pursuing the proimperialist détente initiated by Mao. Peking's ongoing offer of

political aid to bourgeois regimes throughout the world against the Soviet Union was reiterated in a major article in the October 14 Peking *People's Daily*:

"This new upstart in the ranks of imperialism [the Soviet Union] is bound to carry out an all-round aggression and expansion against the Third World with tenfold of voracity and hundredfold of madness. Through their experiences of struggles in many years, the Third World countries and their peoples have come to realize more and more clearly that Soviet social-imperialism has gone farther than old-line imperialism in its aggression and expansion abroad and is their most dangerous enemy."

An October 14 Hsinhua dispatch broadly hinted that the new regime's interpretation of this line would include support to the military dictatorships of Latin America against Cuba. In a friendly review of an article entitled "Soviet Strategic Triangle Threatens Latin America" in the Argentine magazine *Review of the River Plate*, reflecting the anticommunist propaganda of the Argentine military regime, Hsinhua wrote:

"The article says that the open intervention of Cuban armed forces in Angola, masterminded by the Soviet Union, has led the countries of the American continent to reconsider the advisability of taking some kind of preventive measures to preclude future acts of Soviet aggression that use the armed forces of a third country as mercenaries."

While this bid is formally addressed to the Argentine generals, Peking is well aware that it will be read with interest by the Videla junta's inspirers in Washington. □

### New 'Kill Mechanism' for Israel

President Ford has agreed to provide Israel with \$100 to \$150 million in new weapons that were previously not being sold to the Zionist regime. Among the new weapons is a type of cluster bomb perfected in Vietnam.

The bomb, a "fuel-air explosive," squirts out a film of fuel as much as thirty feet in diameter as it nears the ground. This fuel mist is then detonated. The concussion of the blast crushes bodies, and people in the area are then torn apart by the rush of air (including that in their lungs) into the empty space created by the explosion. A firestorm follows.

"We think of this not as a weapon, but as a kill mechanism," the narrator of a 1972 film made by the military says in describing the bomb. "It does interesting things to mechanical parts and people. The blast builds up pressures. . . . We tested it on sheep placed in foxholes and found their innards burst."

## Expelled From Spain

### Alain Krivine Arrested in Madrid

French Trotskyist leader Alain Krivine and *Rouge* correspondent Michel Rovère were arrested by Spanish police October 18. Also arrested were three Spanish Trotskyists—Felipe Izaguirre, Jaime Pastor, and Lucia Gonzales—and Lucio Lobato, a member of the Central Committee of the Spanish Communist party.

The arrests followed a public meeting of 3,000 persons at the University of Madrid, demanding amnesty for Spanish political prisoners and exiles. Krivine, who was the presidential candidate of the Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire (LCR—Revolutionary Communist League) in 1969 and 1974, addressed the meeting at the invitation of student organizations.

Lobato, who has spent twenty-five years of his life in Spanish prisons, Izaguirre, who had recently been freed after a sentence of seven years, and Pastor also addressed the meeting. Both Izaguirre and Pastor are members of the Liga Comunista Revolucionaria/Euzkadi ta Azkatasuna-VI (LCR/ETA-VI—Revolutionary Communist League/Basque Nation and Freedom-VI, a sympathizing organization of the Fourth International in Spain).

The arrests came during the evening following the meeting. Krivine, Lobato, and Pastor were arrested in Madrid as were Gonzales and Rovère. Izaguirre and his lawyer, Miguel Castels, who had left Madrid by train, were arrested when their train reached the station in San Sebastian.

Krivine and Rovère were expelled from Spain on the evening of October 19.

While the police claim the arrests came because the campus meeting had not been authorized by Spanish authorities, they were part of a general crackdown.

On October 21, the police picked up Gregorio López Raimundo, general secretary of Partit Socialista Unificat de Catalunya (United Socialist party of Catalonia, the Catalan branch of the Spanish Communist party).

The Spanish government also banned the convention of the Partido Socialista Obrero Español (PSOE—Spanish Socialist Workers party, the country's largest Social Democratic party), which had been set for November 4-7. European Social Democratic leaders, as well as Romanian and Yugoslav leaders, had been expected to attend the meeting. □

## Bill of Rights Eliminated From New Constitution

### Thai Junta Suppresses All Dissent

King Phumiphol Aduldet of Thailand approved October 22 the establishment of a new military-dominated regime in the aftermath of the bloody October 6 coup. He also signed into law a new constitution, which excluded the extensive bill of rights that was part of the constitution abolished on the day of the coup.

The new cabinet included Adm. Sangad Chaloryu as defense minister and Gen. Boonchai Bamroongphong as deputy prime minister. Prime Minister Thanin Kravichien was appointed by the junta a few days after the coup. The new regime also includes several members of the Committee of 99, a group of rightist business figures set up shortly after the October 1973 student and labor upsurge that overthrew the old military dictatorship of Thanom Kittikachorn.

On October 20, Col. Karoon Kengradomying announced that 4,287 persons had been arrested since the coup, of whom 2,647 were still in custody. Other government officials indicated the real figures

may be higher.

Among additional measures taken by the military junta are the following:

- An ordinance allowing preventive detention without trial or charges was extended from thirty days to six months.

- All cases are to be tried before military tribunals, with no right to appeal.

- Wide areas of the countryside have been declared "Communist-infested zones," where all civil liberties are suspended.

- The teaching of all political theory, "including democratic concepts," was banned in the schools.

At least thirteen newspapers have been banned since the coup, and on October 19 two rightist papers published a list of names of fifty-seven journalists and editors slated for possible arrest.

Police and troops are continuing to seize and burn "subversive" books, and according to a report by Lewis M. Simons in the October 20 *Washington Post*, "Huge bonfires burn everyday at police stations throughout the capital." □

## Committee Formed in Poland to Defend Worker Militants

By Tony Thomas

A group of oppositionists in Poland have announced the formation of the Committee to Support Worker Victims of the Repression. Its aim is to rally public support for workers who have been victimized since the strikes at Radom and Ursus in June.

In a public appeal issued September 23 (see facing page), the committee condemned the Gierek regime's "total contempt for the law" and declared that it was the responsibility of the Polish people to defend the workers against the regime.

The founders of the committee not only signed their names, but added their addresses and telephone numbers so they could be contacted by supporters of the fight for socialist democracy.

Among the committee's initiators were Jerzy Andrzejewski, one of the most popular contemporary Polish writers; Jacek Kuron, one of the authors of the 1965 open letter to the Polish Communist party; and Edward Lipinski, one of Poland's best-known economists.

As part of the defense campaign, the committee has issued a series of public communiqués documenting the Stalinist regime's violation of workers' rights. Excerpts from the first communiqué, dated September 24, 1976, were published in the October 6 issue of the French Trotskyist daily *Rouge*.

The communiqué reported on the conditions in Bialystok prison, where some 1,100 workers from Radom were crowded into forty-five cells, with a minimum of twenty-five persons to a cell.

It also said, "Unverified rumors are circulating that five persons were killed in connection with the events of June 25. The names and conditions of death of two of them are known. Father Zenon Kotlarz was killed at his home by unknown persons about two weeks after the events of June 25, after his release and after the security bodies had accused him of having blessed the demonstrators. In addition, Janusz Brodyna, twenty-eight-years old, died in Koszarowa Street, after a brutal interrogation."

Of the seventy victims of repression the committee has received direct information from, "all have been beaten, the real word is tortured," the communiqué reported.

The communiqué said, "At least five persons have been tried twice for the same offense, for the same acts, and with the same prosecution witnesses. In these instances, the court issued a second verdict, without taking account of the first, which had not been dismissed."

The committee is also carrying out a



GIEREK

fund-raising campaign to help the families of workers imprisoned and laid off during the struggles.

The September 24 communiqué said: "At present, financial aid for the workers of Ursus and Radom has reached the sum of 160,000 zlotys. For the month of October, we will need 555,000 zlotys for the two towns. This will allow us to meet the minimum requirement at Radom, for we have given up hope of being able, as we were in Ursus, to turn over to those who were fired 50 to 80 percent of their wages. In addition, at Radom there are many more than 200 families in need."

The rising struggle against the bureaucracy and the actions of the committee have encouraged a political defense for workers on trial.

F. Dupain, a correspondent for *Rouge* who was able to attend the trial of a number of workers from Ursus, quoted a speech of one of the defense lawyers in the case:

If I had not been the defender of Chmielewski, I would have believed what the newspaper *Zycie Warszawy* asserted, that this was the case of a hooligan and a drunkard. But I know today that this is an exemplary worker. How can these workers be accused of having acted against the

economic interests of the country, when it is precisely those interests they were defending by expressing their discontent? If real freedom existed in this country, none of this would have happened. It should be pointed out that more things were said in Polish newspapers between 1876 and 1906, when there was official censorship, than today.

Supporters of the defense committee have gone to the trials of the worker militants, even at the cost of arrests and beatings by the Stalinist police.

The September 24 communiqué said that on September 16 and 23 six Warsaw youths—Ludwik Dorn, Zofia Krajewska, Jan Tomasz Lipski, Antoni Macierewicz, Stanislaw Puzyna, and Zofia Winawer—went to the trials at Radom of the workers accused of being involved in the June 25 action.

The communiqué reported:

As they were leaving the courtroom at the end of the trial, around 3:00 p.m., they were arrested by a group of militiamen led by Lieutenant Lech Kaminiski, an officer of the security police. They were handcuffed and were all led off to the local police headquarters in Radom.

There, the police tried to interrogate them in an illegal manner, without telling them why they had been arrested. The interrogation lasted until 12:30 a.m. During the interrogation, they were threatened and insulted, and an attempt was made to confuse them as to what their rights were. Ludwik Dorn was beaten by the security police including, among others, Lieutenant Prusek. They hurled anti-Semitic insults at him. He was beaten in the ribs, and they tried to strangle him.

A week later, on September 23, L. Dorn, G. Jaglarska, A. Macierewicz, and M. Tomezik were called before the regional court in the city of Radom. They were followed by Lieutenant Prusek, and at about 2:30 p.m. they were arrested and taken to the local police headquarters. There, an effort was made to interrogate them. Three of them were released about 7:30 p.m. the next day. That day as well, no legal reason for their arrest was given. Moreover, L. Dorn was beaten on the soles of his feet.

On October 1, Antoni Macierewicz, and Jan Josef Lipski, two members of the committee, were arrested along with Lipski's son in the corridors of the courthouse at Radom. They had come to attend the trial of Nogi and Gierek, two workers arrested at Radom on June 25.

Dupain reported that Nogi's trial had been postponed four times because of the absence of witnesses. The militiamen who claimed they recognized them as perpetrators of the June 25 events "seemed to have some problems getting to the court," Dupain said.

Gierek, who had earlier been sentenced to two years in prison plus three years of probation, was sentenced at this trial to a fine of 10,000 zlotys and twenty-two hours of obligatory "voluntary" work. He was also forbidden to be "caught in a state of drunkenness under penalty of being sent back to prison immediately." (The regime has tried to claim that the worker militants were drunkards.)

Dupain reported that for simply trying to attend the trial, which was supposed to be public, Macierewicz and Lipski and Lipski's son were accused of having links with "Radio Free Europe" and of being "undesirables."

Dupain, who met them as they came out of prison, reported that they had been taken to the local and then regional police headquarters, where they were stripped of their clothes and interrogated:

Since they refused to answer, they were charged with belonging to an illegal organization. They were then jailed in different cells (designed for three, but each had fifteen persons in them). When they were released twenty-seven hours later, they were told that they were considered responsible for every news article that appeared in the West and they would suffer the consequences for them. Their case was then placed in the hands of the authorities in Warsaw.

The courageous example of the committee and the Polish workers they are defending is a sign of the rising struggle for socialist democracy in Poland and throughout Eastern Europe. Their example will carry all the more weight if it is backed internationally by all supporters of workers' democratic rights. □

### Haitians Demand Asylum in U.S.

Since 1972 more than 2,000 Haitian refugees have arrived in the United States, almost all coming by boat to Florida. The U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service has consistently denied their appeals for political asylum, classifying them as "economic refugees," and demanding their deportation. One immigration official recently warned of "a flood of economic refugees" if the Haitians were allowed to stay.

About 500 Haitians are now seeking judicial review of their final orders of deportation or exclusion. Having declared themselves political refugees, they would face almost certain punishment by the dictatorship of President Jean-Claude Duvalier if they were forced to return to Haiti.

One of the lawyers for the Haitians notes that the U.S. government has spent more than \$1 billion to aid anti-Castro refugees from Cuba. "We don't ask for one penny," he said. "We ask for equal rights for these people. We also question whether the fact that our clients are poor, black and fleeing from a right-wing government that is 'friendly' to us is the reason for this extreme treatment."

## Founding Statement of Polish Defense Committee

[The following is the statement issued September 23 to announce the formation of the Committee to Support Worker Victims of the Repression. We have taken the text from the September 29 issue of the French Trotskyist daily *Rouge*. The translation is by *Intercontinental Press*.]

\* \* \*

*An appeal addressed to the population and the authorities of the People's Republic of Poland.*

The revolt of the workers against the price increases, which expressed the reaction of the whole population, has been answered by extremely brutal measures of repression. In Ursus, in Radom, and in other towns, a massive number of demonstrators have been arrested and beaten. In addition, there have been numerous dismissals which, like the arrests, especially hit the families of those who were victims of the repression. These measures were an expression of a total contempt for the law on the part of the official bodies of the government. The courts have issued verdicts without any proof. And the firings were in violation of the labor law. The authorities have gone so far as to compel individuals to make forced confessions. Unfortunately such methods are not new in our country. It is enough to recall the repressive measures taken against those who signed letters of protest against the change in the constitution. Some were expelled from the university. Others were subjected to illegal interrogation and various kinds of blackmail. It has been a long time since the repression has been as massive and as brutal.

For the first time in many years, physical violence has been used during interrogations. The victims of the current repression cannot count on any kind of aid from the bodies that are supposed to defend them, such as the unions, whose activity is almost nonexistent. The social institutions as well refuse them all support.

It is incumbent on the people themselves to play this role since those who have been arrested were defending the interests of all. The only way for the population to defend itself against the nonenforcement of the laws is to demonstrate solidarity and mutual aid.

This is why the undersigned have decided to found the Committee to Support the Workers, so as to give an impetus to this absolutely necessary defense on the legal, financial, and medical levels.

We must know the whole truth about the cases of repression. We are convinced that only full knowledge of the methods used by the government will make an effective defense possible. Therefore, we ask that all who have been victims of repression, or who know of such cases, send this infor-

mation to the members of the committee.

To our knowledge 60,000 zlotys has already been collected to aid the workers. But the need is much greater, and only an initiative taken by the entire population can meet it. We must organize ourselves in a way that can aid the victims wherever they are. In every neighborhood, in each factory, it is necessary to find courageous people who will come to their aid and begin giving collective support.

The measures of repression used against the workers violate human rights established in international law as well as in Polish law: the right to work, the right to strike, freedom of expression, of assembly, and to demonstrate.

That is why the committee, in accordance with the resolution of the conference of bishops of September 9, 1976, demands amnesty for all those who have been arrested and sentenced, and that they be rehired at their jobs.

The committee calls on the whole population to support these demands. We are deeply convinced that in founding it, we are carrying out our duties as citizens and human beings for the good of the country, the nation, and humanity.

*Committee to Support Worker Victims of the Repression Following the Events of June 25, 1976*

Signatures: Jerzy Adrzejewski, Stanislaw Baranczak, Ludwik Cohn, Jacek Kuron, Edward Lipinski, Jan Josef Lipski, Antoni Macierewicz, Piotr Naimski, Antoni Pajdak, Jozef Rybicki.

(The October 6 *Rouge* reported that Halina Mikolajska, Aniela Steinsbergowa, Adam Szczypiorski, Father Jan Zieja, and Wojciech Ziembinski should be added to the initial list of signers.)

### 'Trapped in Poverty'

The U.S. Commission on Civil Rights has released the first study on the 1.7 million Puerto Ricans in the United States ever undertaken by a federal agency. The report, which was released October 13, said that the number of Puerto Ricans "trapped in poverty" rose from 29 percent in 1970 to nearly 33 percent in 1974.

"Official insensitivity, coupled with private and public acts of discrimination, has assured that Puerto Ricans often are the last in line for benefits and opportunities made available by the social and civil rights legislation of the last decade," the report said.

The figure of nearly one-third of all Puerto Ricans in the United States living in poverty compares to a level of 11.6 percent for all American families as of March 1975. The study called prospects for future improvement in the condition of Puerto Ricans "uncertain."

## One Million Workers Strike in Canada October 14

By Ray Warden



MacInnis/Labor Challenge

Part of protest march of 10,000 in Toronto.

[The following article appeared in the October 25 issue of *Labor Challenge*, a revolutionary-socialist fortnightly published in Toronto.]

\* \* \*

"We're out to fight controls."

According to estimates of the Canadian Labour Congress, more than a million of us walked off the job on October 14 to demand repeal of Trudeau's wage-control law. It was far and away the most powerful protest action ever organized by the labor movement in this country.

No one has tallied the number of mines and mills, factories and offices, shut down on October 14.

"In nearly every city and town some plants were closed or production slowed by the walkout . . ." the *Toronto Star* reported. From Victoria, British Columbia, to St. John's, Newfoundland, workers joined in the protest.

October 14 showed the united opposition of English-Canadian and Quebec workers to Trudeau's controls. About 230,000 Quebec workers walked off the job—more than in any previous strike in the province's history.

Never before have so many Quebec and English-Canadian unionists joined hands in common action.

The protest was strongest in British Columbia, with about 190,000 workers off work. In Vancouver, New Westminster, Nelson, and Victoria, even daily newspapers were shut down. Vancouver's downtown core was tied up as 8,000 workers marched through the streets.

Southwestern Ontario was another strong area. Not an auto or truck rolled off the assembly lines. In Oshawa union halls, veteran auto workers reminisced about their 1937 strike, which established the United Auto Workers in Canada—and eventually helped bring down the Ontario Liberal government of Mitchell Hepburn.

It was among the heavy industrial unions—Steel, Auto, the Woodworkers—that the call to strike action met with the most powerful response. Not since the movement that brought industrial unionism to Canada has the mood of protest run so deeply among industrial workers.

Many highly unionized mining areas were completely shut down. Steelworkers in Thompson, Manitoba, barricaded the road leading to Inco's mine. "Sudbury is as quiet as a grave as protest shuts down city," read a *Toronto Star* headline.

In Sept-Îles, Quebec, nearly all of the town's 16,500 organized workers participated in the strike. Even non-unionized stores and shops were closed for the day.

In Saint John, New Brunswick, workers blockaded the Reversing Falls Bridge, the main link to the downtown area, causing a miles-long traffic jam. Picketers disrupted bus service in Montreal and Vancouver.

About 15,000 workers were off the job in Cape Breton.

From coast to coast, most construction sites were shut down, as building trades workers walked off the job en masse. Earlier, their international leaders had dissociated themselves from the call for general strike action that came from the May CLC convention.

Among the million of us out on October 14, some were on their first strike ever. In Toronto, Voyager Colonial Ltd. was forced to close its bus operations for the first time in 49 years.

At the request of Domglas Ltd., the Ontario Labor Relations Board ruled that a strike by the company's workers would be illegal. By implication, all the province's workers who took strike action October 14 were in breach of the law.

Defiantly, at least three-quarters of the workers at Domglas's three Ontario plants were out on the day of protest. A key test of labor's ability to continue the struggle is its readiness now to defend workers facing victimization for exercising their right to protest.

Hundreds of workers ignored the advice of their leaders, or votes by their union locals to remain on the job, and left work to join the protest. Others, fearing reprisals by the employers for walking out, joined mass picket lines before work, or attended lunch-hour rallies against the controls.

Across the country, according to CLC figures, 140,000 persons joined in October 14 rallies and demonstrations. In the major metropolitan centers especially, most demonstrations were smaller than organizers predicted. Evidently, union leaders did not adequately focus on the need for demonstrations in campaigning for the cross-country strike.

Nonetheless, labor's day of protest saw the largest number of workers in the streets in the country's history.

October 14 gave hundreds of thousands of workers their first experience in mass political action. Such confrontations pose the need for a labor government.

Banners on demonstrations in Vancouver, Edmonton, Calgary, Toronto, and other centers proclaimed the New Democratic party's support for labor's day of protest. In Toronto, leaflets were distributed on the



rally of 10,000, urging unionists to join the NDP.

NDP leaders addressed several of the demonstrations. Ontario NDP leader Stephen Lewis spoke to the Toronto rally, and read a message of support from federal leader Ed Broadbent, unable to attend because of a death in his family.

Former federal NDP leader David Lewis spoke to the demonstration in Sudbury. Demonstrators in Edmonton heard Alberta NDP leader Grant Notley.

And while workers demonstrated in the streets, the NDP caucus in Ottawa moved a motion of no-confidence in the Trudeau government, demanding repeal of the wage-control program. The Liberals and Tories combined to defeat the NDP motion.

Labor's allies joined in the protest demonstrations as well. There were small contingents of students at many of the labor rallies.

The rally in Hamilton was addressed by a representative of the local coalition against cutbacks. In Toronto, Ontario Working Women, a caucus of women trade-unionists, distributed leaflets, and a group of gay New Democrats carried a banner. Anti-poverty groups and pensioners were represented at some of the actions.

Leaders of the National Farmers Union and Native organizations spoke to rallies in Saskatchewan. In Regina, a representative of the university students' union addressed the demonstration.

Labor's day of protest laid the basis for involving workers' allies in even greater numbers in the movement against wage controls.

October 14 was an unprecedented display of the labor movement's power. It also revealed some of the weaknesses in the anti-wage-control movement.

The strike was weakest in the transportation industry, and among public sector workers. Most teachers and government employees in English Canada are only beginning to see themselves as workers and trade unionists, and to gain some experience in militant struggle. Moreover, as workers most in the public eye, they felt the pressure of Ottawa's vicious propaganda campaign against the strike especially acutely.

CLC President Joe Morris set the failure of some unions to participate fully in the protest day in proper perspective. "After all, this was a first effort, and even to get the response we did was a great success," he said. "This sort of exercise is completely new to the trade union movement in this country."

Indeed, October 14 was something new. The call for general strike action confronted unions with an unprecedented challenge. The discussion of wage controls and how to fight them was forced onto the floor of countless union meetings. Unionists had to face a range of new questions and problems:

What's wrong with the wage-control

program? Is there an alternative program that could really fight inflation?

How can the controls be defeated? What will a one-day strike accomplish? Is it really worth a day's pay?

Is it right to break unjust laws? What about the "sanctity of the contract"?

How can we win new allies to the fight against controls?

How can we get rid of Trudeau, and get a government that really represents us?

For weeks the discussion raged in union locals—and spilled over into society at large. Across the country October 14 became a main topic of discussion on the campuses and in NDP constituency associations. New supporters were won to the movement against wage controls. And now the success of October 14 will advance the discussion further.

New life was breathed into many union locals. Many workers took on organizational responsibilities in their unions for the first time. When union leaders hesitated to take on their duties, local union militants came together in an attempt to fill their place. New structures were established, new links forged among unions, that will ease the task of mobilizing the ranks of labor in future actions.

The impact of the mass movement began to be felt more profoundly inside the NDP. Under the pressure of the campaign for a general strike, party leaders turned sharply towards deeper involvement with the unions.

Ed Broadbent took his distance from the CLC convention resolution in May that called for general strike action. But with the announcement of the day of protest, he began a speaking tour against the controls, and expressed solidarity with the October 14 strike.

At the Ontario NDP convention in June, party leaders had blocked attempts to put the NDP on record in support of the general strike call. But when the date was set, NDP leaders came out in unanimous support for October 14. The Ontario NDP newspaper made building support for the strike a top priority.

Even British Columbia NDP leader Dave Barrett, who had supported the wage controls as premier of the province, endorsed the one-day strike. His rapid conversion is certain testimony to the power of the mass movement against the wage controls.

The NDP's contribution to building October 14 should draw new forces into the party. The momentum of the fight against wage controls can strengthen the ties between the party and the developing mass movement.

Labor's day of protest marked a giant step forward in forging the mass movement that can defeat Trudeau's wage-control program. On October 14 one million workers gave up a day's pay to show their commitment to fighting the controls. They had a taste of the power

they can wield in united, cross-country action. They are better organized than ever before to do battle with Trudeau. The impact of the one-day strike will win new forces to the movement.

Still, Trudeau gives no sign of backing down from his wage-control offensive. Even a December, 1978, end to the program is "not for sure . . .," he told CBC interviewer Barbara Frum on the eve of the protest.

We have now entered the second year of the controls, and tightening of the wage guidelines. In the coming months pressure will build in the unions' ranks for an even more powerful mobilization of labor's power. □

### Anti-Semitism in Soviet Journal

Jewish publications in New York have called attention to another anti-Semitic article in an official Soviet journal. The March 1975 issue of *Moskva*, organ of the Writers' Union of the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic, contained an article by Dmitri Zhukov called "Zionism Without Embellishment." The theme of the article is that Jews are plotting to rule the world.

Zionists, according to the *Moskva* article, "have taken over the press, radio and television in many countries. . . ." In fact, it says, by the turn of the century "the Jewish bourgeoisie . . . had already seized a quite significant portion of the world's wealth and strove to get into its hands everything that remained."

Zhukov even defends the anti-Semitic pogroms of the tsarist era as an expression of class struggle. Although the mass of Jews were among the poorest of the tsar's subjects, Zhukov cites alleged evidence that they exploited the population of Byelorussia and the Ukraine. He says that "the protest which was prompted against this situation deserves to be designated as a phenomenon of the class struggle, rather than anti-Semitism."

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## Dublin Government Overrides Opposition to Emergency Law

By Gerry Foley

Irish President Cearbhall O Dálaigh signed the ruling coalition's emergency powers bill October 15, after its constitutionality was upheld by the country's Supreme Court.

The new law suspends the constitution as regards "security" legislation. Thus, by endorsing it, the Supreme Court in effect abdicated its responsibility for safeguarding the constitutional rights of Irish citizens accused of being a threat to the political order.

In addition, a Criminal Law bill, signed on September 25, increases the penalty for membership in the Irish Republican Army from two to seven years. It also raises the penalty for "obstructing" the government in carrying out its "duties" from seven to twenty years.

According to the Offences Against the State (Amendment) Act passed in December 1972, the word of a senior police officer that he believes the accused is guilty of these offences is sufficient to convict.

Special powers legislation passed on the eve of World War II and reinvoked in the spring of 1972 provides for three-judge tribunals to try political cases and abolishes the right of jury trial.

The Dublin government did not wait long to make use of its latest special powers law. On October 18, three days after O Dálaigh signed the bill, it moved to extend censorship of radio and television, which for years have been forbidden even to broadcast Irish nationalist traditional ballads.

An order was issued by Conor Cruise O'Brien, minister for posts and telegraphs, banning all interviews with representatives of the republican political organizations. Radio and TV reporters were forbidden, moreover, to refer to any statements by the republican organizations or their representatives. The new legislation empowers the government to impose such censorship also on the written press.

Under the latest special powers legislation, for example, republicans can be prevented from defending themselves publicly against provocative slanders by the government or the capitalist press.

The way in which the Irish and international press built up the Belfast "peace marches" that began last August shows the intention of the imperialists and their neocolonialist allies to use the media as a weapon against the anti-imperialist movement.

The big press, especially in the United States and Britain, portrayed the organiz-

### O Dálaigh Resigns as President

Irish President Cearbhall O Dálaigh resigned October 22, as the conflict over the coalition government's emergency powers law continued to deepen.

O Dálaigh's move was prompted by an attack from Minister for Defense Patrick Donegan, who denounced him at a dinner meeting of military officers in Mullingar October 18 as a "thundering disgrace." Donegan was infuriated by the president's insistence on referring the special powers legislation to the Supreme Court before signing it. He suggested that the president did not

"stand behind the state," while it was the army's duty to do so.

O Dálaigh's resignation brings strong pressure to bear for new general elections, which the coalition seems to want to avoid. It makes crystal clear that even the ruling circles are deeply divided over the new repressive laws, and that the government lacks any mandate for its draconian measures. The coalition is thus clearly in a very weak position, and an explosive crisis could develop rapidly.

ers of the demonstrations against "violence" in Ireland as representatives of a "silent majority" heroically braving the intimidation of nationalist fanatics.

How grave this intimidation was, according to the big press, was shown by the shooting of an elderly member of the "peace movement," Mrs. Brigid McKenna, in Belfast on September 24. The Provisional IRA was alleged to be responsible.

However, in its September 28 issue, *An Phoblacht*, the Dublin weekly that reflects the views of the Provisionals, said:

"According to published statements on behalf of such Republican activist units no seeker of peace in Ireland has been or will be assaulted or interfered with in the slightest by them, as a peace worker." *An Phoblacht* stressed that the attack on Mrs. McKenna "is condemned without reservation by all genuine Republicans." The article went on to say:

"... locals of the area have no doubt about who the assailants were—Loyalists. Manor Street and the Cliftonville Road area [where the attack occurred] has been the scene of over thirty sectarian [communalist] murders and all were against Catholics. Most of the victims had been brutally stabbed to death."

The Provisionals' statements about this case were disregarded by the big press. The *New York Times*, for example, was so eager to present the "peace women" as victims of the Provisional IRA that it distorted a key incident in a blatant way. In an editorial October 6, it said:

"The women launched the movement after three small children were killed and their mother—Miss Corrigan's [one of the

two leaders] sister—was critically injured by a runaway car driven by an Irish Republican Army terrorist fleeing from British soldiers in Belfast."

The image created was one of a desperado careening wildly through a peaceful neighborhood, heedless of innocent passersby. The editorial did not explain that the car was "runaway" because its driver had died instantly under a hail of bullets from British troops.

In its August 20 issue, *An Phoblacht* said that a British patrol opened fire without warning on a car driven by Danny Lennon, a known Provisional activist and former internee. British authorities finally admitted, after many conflicting reports, that no shots had been fired from Lennon's car.

The only corrective to the bias of the pro-imperialist press has been the small papers of the republicans and the left in general and the professional conscience of individual journalists. Now the government czar of the Irish media, still considered a "liberal" in British and American intellectual circles, has the power to declare honest journalism a crime against the public order, and he has proceeded to exercise that power with the missionary zeal to be expected from a man who has indicated that his purpose is to extend "modern civilization" to Ireland. The obvious next step is to ban pro-republican publications and then the publications of the other left groups.

O'Brien was, in fact, so eager to extend censorship that he revealed what the government intended to do before the bill was passed, thus helping to strengthen the opposition to it.

In its September 6 issue, the *Irish Times*

reprinted an entire article from the *Washington Post*, in which Bernard Nossiter, the paper's correspondent in Ireland, described a conversation with O'Brien.

He [O'Brien] cites Holmes' dictum that free speech does not license the cry of "fire" in a crowded theatre, and says sardonically, "this theatre is a bit crowded."

He pulls from his files letters to Coogan's *Irish Press* [the largest Dublin capitalist paper]. They denounce contributions to a memorial fund for the murdered ambassador [British envoy Ewart-Biggs, killed by a bomb in July] as an insult to the patriots who died for Irish freedom.

"With this kind of language," O'Brien says grimly, "you induce young people to join the IRA, putting youths at the disposal of men who may order them to kill or maim."

Would he use the law to jail the letter writers? No, but he hints that he might use it against the paper that gave them space.

O'Brien acknowledges that the measure could punish music teachers who lead classes in IRA ballads [all Irish nationalist songs can be considered "IRA ballads"—G.F.] or even history teachers who glorify the Irish revolutionary heroes. He concedes that the editor worried about interviewing an IRA figure has a genuine cause for concern.

Nossiter noted that many Irish editors found the section of the emergency legislation relevant to the press to be "chilling." He himself said that "its scope can only be measured by examining the full text." In fact, the law goes far beyond even suppressing information about the positions of the republicans:

Any person, who expressly or by implication, directly or through another person or persons, or by advertisement, propaganda or any other means, incites or invites another person (or persons generally) to join an unlawful organization or to take part in, support, or assist its activities, shall be guilty of an offence and shall be liable on conviction on indictment to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 10 years.

Partly as a result of O'Brien's untimely revelations, massive opposition developed to the emergency powers bill. The fact that the Irish authorities have decided to press ahead with the repressive measure indicates that they are convinced that once they begin visibly to retreat, the antirepublican ruling coalition will be torn by the pressures of public opinion.

In an article in the September 21 *Irish Times*, political analyst James Downey wrote that the mounting opposition to emergency powers had led to a historic turning point in the political situation that comes "once perhaps only in a lifetime," when "it is possible to say with assurance that things will never be the same again."

The government thought the time was ripe to crush the republican movement, but it found the tide turning against it:

The longer the debate continued, the more opposition to the measures rallied, inside and outside the Oireachtas [parliament]. And the opposition was formidable: much the greater part of the press, "respectable" bodies like the Incorporated Law Society, the Commission for

Justice and Peace and the Irish Council for Civil Liberties—and finally the Labour-trade union movement.

The carthorse is slow to get moving, but once he starts he pulls a lot of weight. It soon



PRESS CZAR CONOR CRUISE O'BRIEN

appeared that the Parliamentary Labour Party had made a bad mistake when it gave advance approval to legislation whose contents were unknown to it [A likely story!—G.F.]. The trade unions naturally took fright at the possibility that the legislation might be used against their members involved in labour disputes. . . .

Trade union protests rolled in; stormy Labour Party meetings were held. It seemed that the leadership was out of touch with feeling in the party. If it wanted examples, it could find them in the cases of two senators. Mr. Ruairi Quinn, who voted for the Emergency Powers Bill, found almost no support in his constituency party, while Mr. Michael D. Higgins, who abstained, was given unanimous support by his.

The Labour party is the weakest link in the ruling coalition, which is dominated by the historically more pro-imperialist party, Fine Gael, based on the big farmers, the vestiges of the British settler establishment, and those sections of big business most integrated into the imperialist system.

Labour's alliance with Fine Gael is founded on naked parliamentary opportunism. Fine Gael is the largest minority party but by itself has little hope of winning enough seats to form a government. The largest bourgeois party, Fianna Fáil, has been the normal majority party since the 1930s. Thus, it is not willing to offer much in the way of concessions to smaller allies. Labour is a small party relative to the two bourgeois parties. Thus, the quickest way for it to get into the government is a bloc with Fine Gael.

However, such a coalition cannot be a very stable one because of the pressures of the unions and workers on the Labour party. With mounting unemployment and attacks on the workers' living standards, it

is increasingly difficult for Labour to remain a junior partner in a right-wing proimperialist government. Mass opposition to the new repressive legislation, in particular with the support of the trade-union movement, could blow the coalition apart. That was apparently what Downey meant when he wrote that the legislation "has done very severe damage to the Labour party and it has probably shortened [the government's] own life as a coalition."

This weakening of the "peace coalition" in the formally independent part of Ireland—the government elected on the promise to keep the "troubles" from spreading to the South at any cost—has, moreover, been paralleled by an explosion of the contradictions in the "peace movement" that London and Dublin hoped would give the appearance of mass support for wiping out the republican movement.

The program of the "peace" demonstrations initiated by Betty Williams and Mairead Corrigan was to rally the largest possible consensus against "violence" in general. Since this movement did not offer any solution to the cause of the conflict in Northern Ireland, the oppression of the descendants of the original Irish Catholic population, it represented in fact a campaign for the restoration of "order."

Since it is this oppression that continually drives Catholic youths with no future into desperate actions against the British and proimperialist army and police, the effect of such a campaign could only be to strengthen the hand of the repressors. Once the Catholic community began to realize that, the "peace movement" was in trouble.

While Williams and Corrigan were in the United States in early October, urging Irish immigrants not to contribute to republican organizations, British troops fired rubber bullets into a group of young "rioters" in the Belfast ghetto of Andersonstown, fatally injuring a thirteen-year-old boy. When members of the "peace movement" turned up at a subsequent protest by mothers in the neighborhood, they got a hot reception. The community demanded that they criticize the British soldiers, which they were forced to do. This, as the October 16 London *Economist* put it, "swiftly earned rebukes from Protestant peace women."

With the clarity and cynicism of representatives of an old ruling class, the *Economist* pointed out:

"In Northern Ireland, peace means different things to different people: centuries of history mean that a Turf Lodge Catholic's concept of peace is different from that of a Sandy Row Protestant. Both can attend peace rallies with sincerity, even if the numbers attending are now declining, even if they are predominantly middle class. In simple terms, a ghetto Catholic wants peace with justice, as he sees it; his Protestant counterpart wants peace with victory." □

## Rightists Greet New Truce With Bullets

By David Frankel



New York Times

Arab heads of state met in Cairo October 25 for another round of discussions on the war in Lebanon. On the agenda was implementation of the cease-fire plan adopted a week earlier under pressure from King Khalid of Saudi Arabia. But in Lebanon itself, an ominous offensive by right-wing Christian forces backed by the Israeli regime placed a question mark over how long the latest truce would last.

On paper, the agreement worked out October 18 among Khalid, Palestine Liberation Organization head Yassir Arafat, Syrian President Hafez al-Assad, Egyptian President Anwar el-Sadat, President Elias Sarkis of Lebanon, and Kuwaiti Sheik Sabah al-Salam al-Sabah represented a substantial victory for Assad.

The plan called for a pan-Arab force of 30,000 troops to supervise the cease-fire. There was no mention of a Syrian withdrawal from Lebanon, and the likelihood is that the largest single contingent in the truce force will be composed of the Syrian troops currently occupying most of Lebanon.

Furthermore, the outline of the truce plan is similar to what Assad has been demanding all along. Rival forces are supposed to withdraw to the lines they occupied before the civil war began in April 1975. The pan-Arab force will then supposedly supervise enforcement of the 1969 Cairo agreement restricting Palestinian guerrillas to refugee camps and to

specific areas of southern Lebanon, while limiting their armament.

The truce force is also supposed to separate the warring factions, confiscate all heavy weapons, arrest violators of the truce, and help the Lebanese government to reestablish its authority and restore public services.

Despite the fact that Assad has been publicly advocating such steps, Khalid reportedly had to put heavy pressure on him to get agreement to the plan. Assad would prefer not to be hampered by the other Arab regimes in his actions in Lebanon. Also, the Saudi regime, which backed the Egyptian-Israeli disengagement accords in the Sinai, apparently has finally forced Assad to give up his campaign against the Sinai accords as part of the deal on Lebanon.

"As though a hidden conductor had waved his baton," John K. Cooley reported from Cairo in the October 20 *Christian Science Monitor*, "strident Egyptian and Syrian propaganda campaigns against each other suddenly fell silent. . . ."

Cuts in economic aid from Saudi Arabia would have had a devastating impact on the Syrian economy, which is already laboring under the burden of the intervention in Lebanon. Although the rate of inflation in Syria is officially put at 14 percent, some experts believe it is as high as 30 percent. Assad has spent \$200 million on the intervention in Lebanon since June—almost as much as has been allocated for social services in his current budget.

Shortages of basic consumer goods are increasing, and there have been reports of widespread unrest in the towns of Hama and Aleppo.

Assad's purpose in Lebanon all along has been to maintain a dominant position for his regime there by playing off the Maronite rightists against the Palestinian movement and the Lebanese left. The only objection of Sadat and his Saudi and Kuwaiti backers to this was that Assad was trying to freeze them out by acting alone. Also, as has been demonstrated by the latest truce agreement, they hoped to use Assad's predicament in Lebanon to force him to end his campaign against the Sinai agreements.

But now that Assad has made his deal, can he carry it out in Lebanon? Bashir Gemayel, military commander of the right-wing Phalange, greeted the new cease-fire agreement by saying, "We refuse anything that takes us back to before April 13, 1975,

because that means all the destruction and death will have been in vain."

Phalangist forces, using tanks supplied by Israel, have taken eight villages near the Israeli border since the truce went into effect October 21. Fierce fighting has taken place around the town of Merj' Uyun, and the town of Bint Jbail, an administrative center with some 15,000 inhabitants, is under heavy rightist pressure.

"We shall not lay down our weapons until we clear the south of the Palestinian mercenaries and their allies and in order to attain this goal we are ready to cooperate with the devil himself," the Phalangist radio quoted one rightist officer in the south as saying.

Thus, if Assad is serious about implementing the cease-fire in the south, he will have to turn on his right-wing allies. But the Israeli regime has made it clear that it will not tolerate Syrian forces near its borders unless they are there to fight Palestinians.

The cease-fire agreement reached in Riyadh also calls for the return of Palestinian guerrillas to their bases in southern Lebanon—another provision that cannot be carried out without coming into collision with the Israeli army. In a report from Jerusalem reflecting the tone of unofficial comment by Israeli ministers, Francis Ofner said in the October 21 *Christian Science Monitor*, "If the implementation of the Riyadh agreement reopens this area [of southern Lebanon] to anti-Israel troublemakers, the consequences could become most inflammatory from the point of view of a possible new Israel-Arab warfare."

The fact is, however, that the Arab regimes involved in Lebanon want to reach a negotiated settlement with Israel at the expense of the Palestinians. "The Arabs pretend that they want the Palestinians to establish themselves in southern Lebanon, north of the Israeli border," a regional military commander for the rightists told *New York Times* correspondent Henry Tanner October 24. "In reality," he continued, "they are happy that we are fighting the Palestinians here."

Of course, the fact that Assad has no intention of going to war with Israel does little to reduce the threat of such a war. As the Israelis themselves later admitted, Gamal Abdel Nasser had no intention of going to war in June 1967 either. □

### 74 Arabs Arrested in Hebron

Israeli occupation authorities finally lifted their sixteen-day-long curfew of the West Bank city of Hebron October 20. They then announced October 22 that they had arrested seventy-four Arab youths on charges of desecrating Jewish religious objects during a conflict provoked by Gush Emunim (Band of Believers), an extreme right-wing Zionist sect. Those arrested will be tried in Israeli military courts.

# Argentine Light and Power Workers Go On Strike

By Judy White

Light and power workers in Greater Buenos Aires, Rosario, and La Plata went on strike October 5 in one of the most direct challenges to the Videla dictatorship since it seized power in a military coup March 24.

The strike was called to protest the layoff of 208 workers at Servicios Eléctricos del Gran Buenos Aires (SEGBA—Electric Services of Greater Buenos Aires), almost all of them leaders of the banned light and power workers union.

Also involved were possible revisions in the workers' collective-bargaining agreement.

Thirteen days later, the strike was still on, having been rekindled by the October 8 kidnappings of three SEGBA workers.

Following a wave of street demonstrations by striking workers, Víctor Francisco Seijo, Amado Oscar Mere, and Oscar Polizzo were released. However, the official news agency Télam reported on October 14 that they had been beaten and showed unmistakable signs of torture. Mere and Polizzo were among the workers who had been laid off.

The strike cut off electric and water power in large sections of Argentina or reduced voltage to the point that it was adequate only for lighting.

The October 16 issue of the Buenos Aires daily *La Opinión* reported that Compañía Italo Argentina de Electricidad (Italo-Argentine Electric Company) was operating at 50 percent capacity, while SEGBA was functioning at 64 percent.

Sabotage was reported at several power installations. The union denied responsibility for these acts, labeling them as provocations and mounting guards from their membership to protect power lines.

Bombs also exploded at several headquarters of the light and power workers union and the homes of union leaders, the October 15 issue of *La Opinión* reported. Among those whose homes were targets of such attacks was Juan Carlos Saluzzi, the head of the Rosario section of the union.

The Argentine press reported arrests during the strike but did not specify the total number being held. Among those jailed was Neifer Junco, a twenty-year leader of the light and power workers union in Rosario.

The junta also issued nine communiqués on the strike and sent heavily-armed detachments of military personnel to occupy the offices of the power companies.

Two communiqués dated October 15 spelled out the junta's approach. One stated:



VIDELA

The Process of National Reorganization has set as its prime objective the eradication of subversion and the promotion of the harmonious development of the nation's life. . . .

The subversives will try to capitalize on all confrontations that occur in the Process for their own alien interests. Argentine workers must not play along with them.

The workers were admonished to "subordinate particular or group interests to the overriding national interest."

The second communiqué announced:

The Federal Government has taken the necessary steps to assure the right to work in view of the existence of strike pickets who are intimidating the workers at the electric companies where the struggle is taking place and who are preventing the normal carrying out of work—in particular, electrical maintenance work. The government is arresting and trying agitators, activists, bullies, and saboteurs for infraction of Law 21,400.

Law 21,400 is the Industrial Security Law. It forbids slowdowns and "interruptions of labor" and carries penalties of up to ten years in jail along with heavy fines.

The junta's inability to nip this strike in the bud has begun to give rise to the first

public criticisms of its conduct by various sectors of the bourgeoisie.

The October 18 issue of the *Buenos Aires Herald* said in an editorial, "The results of the current strike of light and power workers will be what decides who is ruling the country—the armed forces or the trade unions." The paper asked, "Is the government strong enough to impose its will on the powerful trade union?"

*La Opinión*, the newspaper that most bluntly called for a military coup in the weeks prior to March 24, characterized the situation as "critical," and one of its staff writers, Fanor Díaz, urged the government to be "flexible enough" to permit the conflict to be negotiated.

Díaz also suggested calling in former labor ministers, who had had to deal with "situations of conflict," to make suggestions on ways to reach an "amicable" solution.

*La Nación*, the most influential Argentine daily, said in an October 18 editorial that allowing the strike to continue had "not done the government any good." It noted that the strikers had been able to take advantage of the fact that "not all sectors that support the government had the same opinion, at least not on the wisdom of the steps taken by SEGBA."

However, the *Nación* editors said, "it is still an error to think that the initial disparity in points of view can continue with regard to the methods for resolving the substantive issues raised in the conflict. The only viable course of action is, in fact, to ratify SEGBA's political action through authoritative action by the military government."

The combined redbaiting campaign and use of the armed forces in the power plants may break this strike, but its breadth, militancy, and duration are a clear sign that the junta has a long way to go to smash the Argentine workers movement.

## Demonstrators Defy Army in Ecuador

Radio broadcasts from the city of Riobamba, 100 miles south of Quito, said that a general strike declared October 21 was continuing October 22 despite attempts by the army to impose martial law on the city. Trenches and barricades in the streets were reportedly hampering the movement of government forces.

Clashes between troops and protesters occurred during demonstrations demanding greater regional autonomy for the impoverished Chimborazo Province. At least one demonstrator was killed and scores were injured.

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## Growing Ferment in Labour Party Over Cutbacks

By Jim Atkinson

LONDON—The Labour government has taken drastic new steps to salvage the fortunes of British capitalism, now in the throes of a chronic and sharpening economic crisis.

After a wave of selling by sterling holders in the foreign currency markets, Chancellor of the Exchequer Denis Healey announced on September 29 that Britain was applying to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) for a massive \$3.9 billion loan. Without the loan, Healey said, the Labour government would be forced to adopt "economic policies so savage I think they would produce riots in the streets. It would mean an immediate and heavy fall in living standards." Oblivious to socialist solutions to the crisis, Healey said that the only alternative to the IMF loan would be an immediate 5% drop in the standard of living and a doubling of unemployment to three million (about 13% of the labour force).

The new loan, which will boost Britain's foreign borrowing to a record \$24 billion, was requested after the value of the pound had plummeted on September 28 below \$1.64. IMF officials are expected to arrive here shortly to supervise the Labour government's stringent anti-working-class economic strategy.

Meanwhile, a new package of austerity measures was unveiled by the government on October 7. The main measure was a two-point jump in the Bank of England's "minimum lending rate" (which determines interest rates throughout the economy) to an all-time high of 15%. This will discourage firms from borrowing to invest in new plant and machinery, so retarding British capitalism's already-weak "recovery" from the recession. The inevitable by-product will be more unemployment.

Healey and Prime Minister James Callaghan hope that the credit squeeze will reduce Britain's double-digit inflation rate (about twice that in a number of rival imperialist countries) to single figures, thereby protecting British capitalists' competitiveness in world markets and shoring up confidence in sterling.

No serious challenge has yet been mounted against government policies, primarily because the union leaders have stayed true to the anti-working-class principles of the "social contract," the pact adopted by the Trades Union Congress (TUC) and the Labour government after Labour's 1974 election victory.

However, there are now signs of increasing discontent among Labour party and

trade-union militants. This much became evident during the debates at this year's Labour party conference, held September 27-October 1 in the coastal resort of Blackpool. In attendance were delegates from the trade unions and the Constituency Labour parties (CLPs, the party's local branches).

On the opening day, the delegates voted down one of the key planks of the government's economic programme: its sweeping cuts in spending on health, housing, education and food subsidies. The conference adopted a resolution, proposed by the National Union of Public Employees (NUPE), which called for "unity in the trade union and labour movement in resistance to the cuts" and instructed the government "to pursue socialist policies which will rapidly reduce the level of unemployment instead of cutting back on the social wage."

The conference also adopted a resolution, moved by the Confederation of Health Service Employees (COHSE), which demanded "the implementation of a massive hospital building programme"; "a minimum wage for 35 hours (tied to the cost of living index) for all National Health Service workers"; the "nationalisation of the pharmaceutical industry"; the total abolition of private medicine; democratisation of the NHS through the election of "boards comprising of Health Service workers, trade unionists and the general public"; and "the abolition of all prescription, ophthalmic and dental charges."

The day before the debate on these resolutions, nearly 1,000 persons, mainly health workers, demonstrated outside the conference centre, waving placards reading "Cut Arms, Not Hospitals!"

The government's spending cuts threaten tens of thousands of jobs, and it is this danger above all which is now impelling the public-sector unions to take some action. The first big protest could come on November 17. This has been slated as a "Day of Action" by several major unions, including NUPE, the National and Local Government Officers' Association (NALGO) and the Civil and Public Service Association (CPSA), as well as by the National Union of Students (NUS). The Day of Action will include a demonstration through the streets of London to Parliament.

Nevertheless, despite this mounting challenge to the cuts, the Blackpool conference (like the TUC congress two weeks

earlier) voted by a big majority to endorse a document entitled "The Next Three Years and the Problem of Priorities," which projected another three years of the social contract.

The kernel of the social contract is trade union acquiescence with the government's wage controls—which, at present, limit the average worker's annual pay rise to 4½% (at a time when the annual inflation rate is approaching 14%). This wage-cut policy was reaffirmed by delegates at Blackpool.

The Labour government's relative "achievement" in selling wage controls to the union leadership was lauded by Callaghan in a key-note address to the Blackpool conference on September 28. "We followed a government whose failure to understand the trade unions led them into conflict and confrontation," he said. "Labour was elected to heal that terrible wound which Tory obstinacy had inflicted on the nation. To replace conflict by partnership and confrontation by cooperation. *We knew this was the only way.*"

Callaghan left no doubt that the objective of government policy was to restore the competitiveness and profitability of British capitalism. "Let me add one more thing that we are a little shy of saying in conference about industrial regeneration," he told the delegates. "The willingness of industry to invest in new plant and machinery requires not only that we overcome inflation but that industry is left with sufficient funds and sufficient confidence to make the new investment. When I say they must have sufficient funds, I mean that they must be able to earn a surplus, which is a euphemism for saying that they must make a profit."

Callaghan ended his speech with a vicious red-baiting attack on left-wing activists in the party. "I also draw the party's attention," he said, "to a new factor creeping into the party that I must warn against, namely those elements who misuse the word 'socialist' and who seek to infiltrate our party and use it for their own ends. They are almost always recognisable by their jargon and their intolerance. They are as much the enemy of the Tribune Group as they are of the Manifesto Group."<sup>1</sup>

1. The Tribune Group is a left Social Democratic current in the Labour party, centered around the weekly paper *Tribune*. About eighty Labour MPs are members of its parliamentary caucus. The Manifesto Group is a caucus of openly right-wing Labour MPs.

Clearly threatening a bureaucratic clamp-down on left-wing critics, Callaghan said that "the national executive committee has a duty to examine their activities and report back to the party."

The attack on the left was resumed by Joe Haines, press secretary to former Prime Minister Harold Wilson from 1969 to 1976, in a scare-mongering feature in the October 1 issue of the mass-circulation *Daily Mirror*. "The loudest and most articulate voices this week have been those of the so-called Revolutionary Socialists—the Trotskyists—who are making their bid to win power within the party machine.

"These are the bully boys. Expose them and they will denounce you as a tool of the capitalists. Oppose them and their mindless sloganeering and they will shout you down. Fight them in the local constituency parties and they will try to force you out.

"They have exploited the worries loyal party members rightly have about the direction of the government policies and captured much of their voting strength."

The witch-hunting outbursts by Callaghan and Haines reflect the Labour leadership's fear of the growing audience for left-wing ideas in the party's ranks, mainly in the CLPs and the party's youth movement, the Labour party Young Socialists (LPYS). About 60 conference delegates were supporters of *Militant*, a weekly paper which bills itself as "the Marxist voice for Labour and youth," and a meeting held in Blackpool during the conference by the paper attracted about 200 conference delegates and observers. About ten delegates supported the views of *Red Weekly* and *The Chartist*, two Trotskyist papers; and a meeting addressed by Tariq Ali, a leader of the International Marxist Group (IMG), the British section of the Fourth International, drew an audience of forty.

A special worry for the party bureaucracy is that right-wing Labour members of Parliament (MPs) will be disowned by their local CLPs and be refused reselection as Labour candidates in the next general election. This has already happened to two sitting Labour MPs. Forty-three CLPs, many of whom are supporters of the Campaign for Labour Party Democracy, submitted resolutions to the Blackpool conference demanding that Labour MPs be subject to a mandatory reselection process held by CLPs within 42 months of a general election. The Conference Arrangements Committee, however, bureaucratically ruled the resolutions out of order; and, when a delegate protested from the floor, the trade union delegations (which represent only the union officialdom) came to the party leadership's rescue by swinging their huge bloc votes<sup>2</sup> against a discussion on the issue.

2. The trade union and CLP delegates to the Labour party conference cast bloc votes on behalf of the memberships they represent. In practice this means that the union leaders dominate the voting, since several million union

The fight for democracy in the Labour party includes another important battle: that of forcing the Labour government and the Parliamentary Labour party (PLP) to carry out the party's conference decisions. Healey, speaking in defence of the govern-



CALLAGHAN: Industry "must make profit."

ment's recourse to the IMF, stressed that this year's resolutions against the cutbacks cut no ice with the government. "I'm going to negotiate with the IMF on the basis of our existing policies, not changes," he warned.

Several other issues debated at the conference highlighted the problem of the government's present non-accountability to the party ranks. The conference voted by 3,314,000 to 526,000 in support of a document, "Banking and Finance," which called for the nationalisation of the four largest clearing banks, one merchant bank and the biggest seven insurance companies. This resolution fell short of advocating a total take-over of the capitalist financial institutions. But even before the conference had had a chance to debate the proposals, Callaghan publicly warned that the government would refuse to implement the plan if it was adopted.

members are affiliated to the Labour party through their unions, while there are about 600,000 individually affiliated members of the CLPs.

A similar fate threatens an anti-racist resolution adopted by the conference. This called on "the Labour government to repeal the 1968 and 1971 Immigration Acts and all legislation that discriminates against immigrants and obstructs their integration into the trade union and labour movement." It also condemned "the implicit racial statements made by members of the Parliamentary Labour party which in demanding an end to all immigration have given credence to the racialists" and pledged "full support to the black community in defending themselves against racist attack." During the debate, however, Home Secretary Merlyn Rees reaffirmed the government's intention to maintain immigration controls.

In recent years, Labour party conferences have repeatedly called for a total embargo on military supplies to the racist regime in South Africa. But these resolutions too have been violated by the Labour government since its return to office in 1974—despite an official arms "ban." This year, again, the Labour conference called for "an end to all forms of military collaboration with South Africa."

These violations of party conference decisions underline the central importance that the struggle for party democracy will have in the fight to build a class-struggle left-wing in the Labour party.

Another key plank of a fighting left-wing's programme would be the defence of the Irish people's struggle for self-determination. This year's Labour conference illustrated the depth of chauvinist backwardness on the Irish question in the British labour movement.

One CLP, Hackney North and Stoke Newington, did submit a resolution for debate at the conference, which called on "the Labour government immediately to withdraw the British army from the north of Ireland and recognise the right of the Irish people to national self-determination." But it never reached the floor. Despite this setback, 140 conference delegates and observers attended a meeting sponsored by the Troops Out Movement (TOM) addressed by the Irish militant and former MP Bernadette Devlin.

Many critical Labour activists are turning to the Social Democrats of *Tribune* for an alternative to Callaghan and Healey, and 1,000 delegates and observers showed up for *Tribune's* conference meeting. But the *Tribune* group has not offered any socialist alternative to the government's assault on living standards. It has merely advocated the imposition of import controls—thereby exporting unemployment to the workers of other countries. Even less has the *Tribune* group challenged the government's military occupation of Northern Ireland.

The job still remains to build an alternative left-wing leadership in the Labour party which can chart out a course of class-struggle policies and action as the crisis deepens. □

## Italian Stalinists Under Fire From Ranks

By William Ross

A revolt by workers against the austerity program announced October 1 by Premier Giulio Andreotti has thrown the Communist party's undeclared alliance with the Christian Democratic government into crisis.

The increase in the price of gasoline included in the austerity package was an immediate blow to key sections of workers in the most heavily industrialized areas.

In the October 24 issue of the Rome weekly magazine *Espresso*, Franco Giustolisi described the blue Monday at Turin's giant automobile factories following the price hike:

"At Gate No. 1, Fiat Mirafiori . . . at 5:00 a.m., the first-shift workers began arriving in small groups. They got out of trolleys or out of cars in which six persons were packed together to save gas . . . gas that now costs 500 lire a liter [about US\$2.25 a gallon]. Now 600 liters of gas costs 330,000 lire [US\$357], which is equal to the monthly pay of a third-category worker, everything included, even the annual bonus.

"The [CP] mayor, Diego Novelli, was waiting outside the gate. No one was surprised. There were handshakes, a few pats on the back. 'Hi, Diego, cold isn't it . . .?' And suddenly there was a whirlwind of questions that indicated precisely how cold it was. 'What are we supposed to do? Do we always have to be the ones who pay? What's the party up to? Does it trust this Andreotti character?' The atmosphere was cold, like the [north Italian] climate. But the inner feelings were even chillier—fury, worry, distrust, and a strong sensation of powerlessness."

Following the June 20-21 legislative elections, the Communist party leadership agreed to permit the formation of a Christian Democrat cabinet headed by Andreotti, while it itself remained outside the government. In return, the Christian Democrats allowed the CP to acquire more trappings of parliamentary respectability, such as the presidency of the Chamber of Deputies.

The CP leaders pressed for developing a working relationship with the Christian Democrats as a preparation for entering a government with them. The Italian press dubbed this arrangement a "popular front in the corridors."

When Andreotti went on TV to announce the austerity package, he clearly had the agreement of the CP leadership. In the October 23 issue of the Amsterdam weekly *Vrij Nederland*, Loucky Content wrote that



BERLINGUER: Gasoline at \$2.25 a gallon hasn't increased his popularity.

before the broadcast, the premier "had consulted with two economic experts from the Communist party, and with Luciano Barca and Giorgio Napolitano. Eyewitnesses who saw the two Communist leaders go into the premier's study said that they seemed to be two ministers meeting with the head of cabinet."

However, the CP quickly found itself faced with a revolt by the workers on whose support it depends. Protest demonstrations developed in many plants. This began in the Alfa Romeo plant in Arese near Milan, where the workers downed tools before the union leaders even knew anything was brewing.

There were protests in the Fiat factories around Turin. In Rivalta, 5,000 workers walked out and marched down the Turin-Pinerolo highway, blocking it for several hours. Against the wishes of the national leadership in Rome, the Turin unions organized a general strike for October 13.

The union bureaucrats were beginning to be swept along by the rank-and-file revolt. Content wrote:

"In the beginning, the union movement—like the CP—aimed at mitigat-

ing Andreotti's unpopular measures by amendments from the left parties in parliament. But this was not good enough for the workers. Pushing and shoving among the three big union federations that usually work together (the Catholic one, the CP one, and the SP one) came out into the open. The union leaders came under heavy pressure. On the one hand, they wanted to follow the CP line, on the other, they wanted to go along with the demands of the workers."

The first signs of a rank-and-file revolt against the CP leadership's support for the austerity program worried the capitalist politicians. One of the slickest, Ugo La Malfa of the Republican party, was quoted in the October 17 *Espresso*, saying:

"We definitely must recognize that the CP has a certain propensity for accepting so-called unpopular measures. In parliament we will see if this propensity is realized fully through concrete decisions. This problem of unpopularity is indeed a very serious one. . . .

"To return to the CP, I am worried by a certain tendency for things to go over its head. When the CP shows that it is aware of the gravity of the situation, it is immediately accused of concessions by some of its competitors. If Lama [the CP union head] shows understanding, Benvenuto or Storti take a harder line. . . . Sometimes, I doubt if we will overcome the crisis even when the CP is in the government."

In a meeting of the CP Central Committee that began on October 18, the conflicts generated in the leadership by pressures from below came into the open. Luigi Longo, the party's left face, opened up an attack on Giorgio Amendola, the most outspoken defender of the need to back the government's austerity program.

It was Longo also in 1968 who was given the task of holding out an olive branch to the radicalized students once it became clear that the party could not continue simply to denounce them.

In an October 20 report in the *New York Times*, Longo was quoted as saying: "We have all been able to take the pulse of the party and public opinion, and I believe that we have all noticed the existence of doubts and reservations about our line.

"This should make us stop and think."

Longo warned that if the party was too eager to prove its "responsibility," it could lose rather than gain even in parliamentary politics.

"We are only fooling ourselves. We not only will lose the influence and prestige



among the masses that is the source of our strength but we also will lose our bargaining power."

Comments by local CP leaders made it clear how strong the pressure from below was. In the campaign for the legislative elections, commentators compared the growth of CP strength relative to that of the increasingly discredited bourgeois parties to the advance of a glacier. Now the rank-and-file revolt has revealed that another powerful cumulative process has been going on.

In the October 24 *Espresso* Gianfranco Borghini, regional secretary for Lombardy, was quoted as saying: "To sum it up, all the doubts and reservations about our strategy that have been accumulating in recent years have come into the open."

Antonio Bassolino, regional secretary for Campania, said: "We are being accused of not knowing where the enemy is." Igino Ariemma, deputy regional secretary for Piedmont, said: "They are asking us what guarantee we have that our sacrifices will lead to any real change." □

### Noel Jenkinson Dies in British Cell

Noel Jenkinson was found dead in his cell October 9 in the British prison at Leicester. He had been sentenced to life imprisonment on the charge that he was part of a team from the "Official" Irish Republican Army that carried out the bombing of the officers' mess at the British military base in Aldershot, England, on February 22, 1972.

Seven persons were killed in the Aldershot explosion—five women workers, a gardener, and a Catholic chaplain. The "Official" IRA took credit for the bombing, announcing that it had carried out the action to avenge thirteen Irish civil-rights marchers shot down by British troops in Derry on "Bloody Sunday," January 30, 1972.

Jenkinson maintained his innocence of the bombing until his death. He was, however, denied appeal in June 1973. He had been an active member of the Irish Civil Rights Association branch in Islington, one of the oldest Irish neighborhoods in London. He had been a sympathizer of the "Official" republican movement. However, he apparently became estranged from them in the months before his death.

In its October 10 issue, the *Irish Sunday Independent* quoted Roland Kennedy of the Prisoners Aid Association, which had handled Jenkinson's defense, as saying: "We are convinced that Noel was perfectly healthy the previous day. Because of the history of his case of previous beatings and further ill-treatment, we are not satisfied with any statement from the Home Office."

Jenkinson was forty-six years old. He had been twice attacked by English common-law prisoners.

## Attempt to Whitewash Torture in Chile Backfires

### Political Prisoners Expose OAS Cover-up

By Judy White

Political prisoners in seventeen jails and prison camps throughout Chile have drafted a document giving details on the step-up of repression before, during, and after the June meeting of the Organization of American States (OAS) in Santiago.

The document refutes OAS General Secretary Alejandro Orfila's attempted cover-up of the Pinochet junta's violations of democratic rights (see *Intercontinental Press*, July 12, p. 1067). It lists the cases of fifteen persons arrested and tortured on the eve of the OAS meeting. Typical was the case of Luis Kurt:

... arrested in Concepción in May 1976, this sixty-year-old journalist was tortured at the "El Morro" barracks in Talcahuano (First Naval Zone) by members of the Naval Intelligence Service and the Regional Intelligence Service. Kurt underwent electric-shock treatment, was punched and clubbed, "hung" by his arms, and immersed in human waste (the submarine). Because of his age and state of health, Kurt is today bedridden at Tres Alamos Prison Camp, after having been "reinterrogated" by the DINA [Dirección de Inteligencia Nacional—National Intelligence Office] in Santiago.

In the days prior to the OAS meeting DINA agents visited prison camps to inform the inmates that if they said anything to OAS representatives they would be tortured again, along with their families. The camps were also searched, and medical checkups for inmates served as the occasion for further intimidation and "interrogation."

In Santiago's jails political prisoners were mixed in with common criminals to conceal their presence, and DINA paid common criminals to attack those that threatened to reveal the truth. Other political prisoners were isolated in special punishment cells and placed on a bread and water diet.

The Pinochet junta also took other steps to prepare for the OAS meeting. In hotels and restaurants to be used by the delegates the regular workers were replaced by armed forces personnel under DINA's control.

A large number of members of the national leadership of the underground Communist party were arrested a few days before the meeting. Victor Díaz, Mario Zamorano Cortés, Jorge Weivel, and other CP leaders were held in the basement of the Congress and later taken to the DINA experimental torture camp at Colonia Dignidad in the south of Chile.

When the OAS meeting was almost over, the DINA captured thirty persons who had taken refuge in the Bulgarian embassy.

The junta claimed they were involved in a "Communist plan" to discredit the government. And, although authorities announced they had all been released the day after their arrest, the document states that many of them were still missing two months later.

"During the OAS meeting," the political prisoners said, "dozens of mutilated bodies showed up in different parts of Santiago. The hands and feet had been removed to prevent identification. The sensationalist press, like *La Tercera de la Hora*, called the seven cases they reported a 'police puzzle.' Then a ban was placed on such reports and the Santiago morgue refused to allow any family members of persons who had disappeared to enter to identify the twenty-three mutilated bodies that were there at that time."

Following the OAS meeting, the document stated, a "veritable frenzy of repression was unleashed" at the prison camps.

At Puchuncavi, 150 members of DINA working for Naval Intelligence occupied the camp one entire day. There was a savage search in which the prisoners were removed from their cells at 7 a.m. without even being permitted to get dressed. After a wholesale beating, the prisoners were forced to remain naked and standing until 5 p.m., when the search was completed.

Almost all the belongings of the prisoners were ruined. The walls and floors of the cells were smashed. The plumbing has been destroyed by being shot up. All the prisoners' books, letters, poems, and photographs of their children and families had been wrecked by the DINA.

The prisoners were threatened with return to the torture centers. . . . Journalist José Carrasco Tapia was severely beaten with fists, feet, and rifle butts, along with other prisoners such as Nibaldo Mena, Jaime Solari, and Gastón Muñoz. The prisoner Juan Balboltín was threatened with death.

The document ends by making an appeal for international protest to protect the lives of those who took the opportunity of the OAS conference to expose the torture going on in Chilean prisons.

These include Luis Corvalán, for his statements to the foreign press; and for their testimony to the OAS on torture: José Cademartori, Jorge Montes, José Carrasco Tapia, Víctor Toro Ramírez, Arturo Villavella, Roberto Moreno, Gastón Muñoz, Fernando Ostornol, Gregorio Navarrete, Iván Parveck, Mario Venegas, Osvaldo Torres, Juan C. Gómez, Gladys Díaz Armijo, Mirta Compagnet, Hugo Urrestarazu, Patricio Bustos, Abercio Parra Flores, Jorge Alarcón Ramírez, Dagoberto Trincado, Guillermo Muñoz, José Miguel Moya, and Ricardo Ruz Zañartu. □

## Thousands Held in South African Witch-hunt

By Ernest Harsch

Whenever Blacks in South Africa have stood up against the racist white minority regime to demand their basic human rights, they have been answered with police clubs, bullets, and prison cells. This has been particularly true since the massive Black protests that began in Soweto in mid-June.

During the demonstrations and strikes, hundreds of young Blacks were gunned down in the streets and thousands were arrested. Claiming that the actions were fomented by "agitators" and "Communist enemies," the security police launched a witch-hunt in the Black townships of Johannesburg, Pretoria, Cape Town, Durban, and other major cities, searching out and arresting virtually every known Black leader in the country.

Under such draconian measures as the Terrorism Act and the recently adopted Internal Security Act, anyone can be detained without charges, bail, court appearances, or access to legal aid. Since the police are not even obliged to reveal the names or whereabouts of those seized, it is impossible to calculate the precise number of political prisoners held under these laws.

In a report made public September 20, the anti-apartheid Christian Institute of Southern Africa stated, "We have reached a point in time when barely a day goes past without the detention of at least one further person, and as at September 10 1976, 300 people are believed to be in detention. This figure includes only those detained under the security laws of South Africa."

The institute estimated that an additional 2,600 persons were arrested during the protests. "This figure can be contested, however, on the basis of individual reports in the Press which suggest a much higher number of people arrested, many of whom have been held for weeks, having had bail application refused and then inexplicably released without having been charged."

Especially hard hit by the witch-hunt are the groups identified with the nationalist current known as the Black Consciousness movement, such as the South African Students Organisation (SASO), the South African Students Movement (SASM), and the Black People's Convention (BPC). According to a September 18 report from Johannesburg by *New York Times* correspondent John F. Burns, about 250 of those being held without trial belong to these groups.

Minister of Justice, Police, and Prisons

James T. Kruger has singled out the Black Consciousness movement for particular attack. Kruger, according to an August 14 report by Burns, condemned Black Consciousness "as an absolutely negative, destructive ideology, and cited unrest among urban blacks in the United States in the 1960's as an example of the chaos it can produce."

The influence of Black Consciousness has spread rapidly since the early 1970s, particularly among Black youths. According to the 1971 "Policy Manifesto" of SASO, "The basic tenet of Black Consciousness is that the Black man must reject all value systems that seek to make him a foreigner in the country of his birth and reduce his basic human dignity. . . .

"The concept of Black Consciousness implies the awareness by black people of the power they wield as a group, both economically and politically. . . .

One of the most prominent leaders of the Black Consciousness movement seized by the Vorster regime is Steve Biko. He was a founder of SASO in late 1968 and the organization's first president. In 1972, he helped establish the Black People's Convention. In 1973, together with several other Black Consciousness leaders, he was banned<sup>1</sup> for a number of years.

After Biko's arrest in Kingwilliamstown, Burns published a report in the September 19 *New York Times* based on an interview with him. According to Burns, Biko criticized the talks between Kissinger and Vorster and demanded that Washington ban any further American investments in South Africa and force the more than 300 U.S. companies now operating there to pull out.

"He made it clear," Burns wrote, "that a government formed around the black-consciousness groups would follow a policy of black socialism, placing severe restraints on private enterprise and sharply cutting, if not eliminating, foreign investment."

Burns then quoted Biko as saying of the mass protests, "The outbursts are going to become increasingly frequent, and the white community, which has so far been very protected, is going to realize how thin their security really is."

According to Donald James Woods, the

1. A banning order prohibits a person from attending gatherings of three or more persons, traveling outside his or her town, or publishing or helping to prepare anything for publication.

editor of the East London *Daily Dispatch*, Biko is, after Nelson Mandela and Robert Sobukwe,<sup>2</sup> "the leader most highly regarded by the more politically aware urban blacks—especially the youth" (*Christian Science Monitor*, September 14).

Biko was at first held under the General Law Amendment Act, but was later held under Section 6 of the Terrorism Act. The report by the Christian Institute pointed out, "This allows for solitary confinement and creates an ideal climate for interrogation and torture."

Other key leaders of the Black Consciousness movement who are known to have been seized by the security police include Mongezi Stofile, Jairus Kgokong, Silumko Sokupa, and Barney Pitso, of SASO; and Mxolisi Mvovo, Thomas Manthata, and Kenneth Rachidi of the BPC.

The Black Parents' Association, a broad umbrella organization including SASO and the BPC, as well as other groups, was formed shortly after the initial protests in Soweto. It, too, has been a target of Vorster's political police. Four of the five members of the BPA's executive have been arrested. They are Harrison Motlana, Aaron Mathlare, Aubrey Mokoena, and Winnie Mandela, who is also the vice-president of the Black Women's Federation and the wife of Nelson Mandela.

Among the other prominent Black figures picked up are Mohammed Timol, the chairman of the Human Rights Council; Barney Ngakane, an official of the South African Council of Churches; Rev. Mangaliso Mkatswa and Dan Mokwena of the Roman Catholic Bishops Conference; and Gibson Kente, a playwright. Members and leaders of the Black Research Institute, the Institute of Black Studies, and the Black Renaissance Convention have also been jailed.

Fatima Meer, a sociologist at the University of Natal and the president of the Black Women's Federation, was initially banned in mid-August from attending meetings for a period of five years under the terms of the Internal Security Act. She was later arrested. Her husband, Ismail Meer, was a leader of the passive resistance campaign carried out by Indians<sup>3</sup> in

2. Before their imprisonment in the early 1960s, Mandela was a central leader of the African National Congress (ANC) and Sobukwe of the Pan-Africanist Congress (PAC).

3. South Africa's Black population is composed of 710,000 Indians, 17.8 million Africans, and 2.3 million Coloureds. The Indians were originally

Natal in 1946 and a defendant in the infamous Treason Trial, which lasted from 1956 to 1961. Shortly after the Sharpeville massacre in 1960, Fatima Meer participated in protests against the imprisonment of thousands of Black leaders.

Her son, Rashid, has also been seized. Together with two other student leaders at the University of Durban-Westville, Yunus Ismail Karrim and Lloyd Padayachee, he was picked up by the security police and held under the General Law Amendment Act. Shortly after the arrests, 1,500 Indian students at the university met and denounced the detentions as "blatant psychological warfare" by the police. They decided to continue a boycott of classes (initially called in solidarity with the Soweto demonstrations) to protest the arrests and then marched through the campus singing "We Shall Overcome."

After Coloured students and workers began participating in demonstrations and strike actions, the apartheid regime also started detaining prominent leaders of the Coloured population. The most important figure arrested so far is Rev. Alan Hendrickse, the chairman of the national executive of the Labour party, a Coloured organization opposed to apartheid. Also detained are his son, Peter; Joseph Titus, the principal of a Coloured school in Cape Town; and Professor Ismail, the head of the mathematics department at the University of the Western Cape.

A total of ten journalists are known to have been detained since the initial protests in June. Only one, David Rabkin, has been charged and tried. Sentenced by a Cape Town judge September 29, Rabkin drew a ten-year prison sentence on charges of promoting the aims of the outlawed African National Congress and the South African Communist party.

Two of the journalists, Nat Serache and Harry Mashabela, have been released. Those still believed to be in jail include Peter Magubane, Willie Nkosi, Jan Tugwana, Patrick Weech, Duma Ndlovu, Anthony Holiday, and Joseph Thloloe, the president of the Union of Black Journalists.

The repression in the Transkei, Pretoria's "showpiece" Bantustan, has also been intensified. Transkei Minister of Justice George Matanzima announced October 11 that two Black actors, John Kani and Winston Ntshona, were arrested under the territory's security laws. Kani and Ntshona were recipients of the 1974-75 Tony Award for best actor for their New York performances in *Sizwe Banzi Is Dead* and *The Island*.

Following demonstrations in Lady Frere in solidarity with the Soweto upsurge,

brought to South Africa as indentured laborers for the sugar plantations of Natal. The Coloureds are descendants of the early white settlers, Indians, Malay slaves, and native Khoikhoi, San, and other African peoples.



Arrested for protesting racist regime.

fifty-seven Transkeian high-school students were each sentenced to six months in prison. In July, Hector Ncokazi and twelve other leaders of the opposition Democratic party were jailed in the Transkei.

Those arrested since the Soweto upsurge are only the most recent victims of the white regime's repression. The witch-hunt against the Black Consciousness movement actually began several years ago, when SASO, the BPC, and other groups were initially established. Scores of Black Consciousness leaders were arrested and more than sixty were forced to flee the country. In February 1974, Onkgopotse Abraham Tiro, a former SASO leader at the University of the North at Turfloop, was assassinated in Botswana.

Other Black nationalist leaders have been rotting in Pretoria's jails since the early 1960s. Among the most well known are Nelson Mandela, Govan Mbeki, Walter Sisulu, and Ahmed Kathrada, leaders of the ANC who are serving life sentences on Robben Island. Robert Sobukwe, the leader

of the PAC, is living in enforced exile in Kimberley in Cape Province.

Pretoria's repressive policies are not only reserved for Black political leaders, but are directed at the Black population as a whole. At any one time, there can be up to 100,000 persons, the overwhelming majority of them Black, in South Africa's prisons. Each year, one in every four adult Africans is arrested, primarily for violations of the pass laws, which regulate African movement. This amounts to an average of about 3,000 Africans arrested each day.

South African prisons are thus extremely overcrowded, with up to 120 prisoners in one cell. In addition, the lack of sufficient sanitary facilities and of adequate diets contributes to the outbreak of epidemics among African prisoners.

In his book *African Liberation Movements*,<sup>4</sup> Richard Gibson reported that "according to United Nations statistics, more than half the world's annual executions are carried out in South Africa. Between July 1963 and June 1965 alone, 281 death sentences were passed by white judges and 194 Africans were executed. This amounted to an average of two executions every week."

Torture of political and other prisoners is common practice in South Africa. In a 1973 report entitled "Maltreatment and Torture of Prisoners in South Africa," the United Nations Special Committee on Apartheid summarized its findings:

The conclusion is inescapable that cruelty against opponents of *apartheid* is the application of a deliberate and centrally directed policy, and that torture by the Security police is condoned, if not actually encouraged, by the Government. Allegations of similar tortures have been made from so many centres and have involved so many local officers—in addition to certain interrogators who travel from Pretoria to other areas—that there is reason to believe that Security Branch officers have been trained in these methods.<sup>5</sup>

The September 20 Christian Institute report listed some of the methods of torture commonly used against political prisoners. According to the September 26 *Manchester Guardian Weekly*, they include:

- Hanging prisoners from rafters by a rope round the neck; compelling a prisoner to lift weights above the head for an extended period, sometimes wearing shoes lined with pebbles;
- Holding their head under water in a toilet basin;
- Threatening people with assault and death;
- Depriving them of sleep;
- Standing blindfolded for five days and nights;
- Applying electric shock treatment to the genitals;

4. (London: Oxford University Press, 1972), p. 30.

5. Quoted in *Amnesty International Report on Torture* (London: Duckworth in association with Amnesty International Publishers, 1973), p. 126.

- Tying their hands above their heads so that their feet barely touch the ground; and
- Assaulting them with kicks and Karate blows.

From the early 1960s until just before the Soweto rebellions, at least twenty-three political prisoners are known to have died while in police custody. Since the recent witch-hunt began, at least three more persons have died in detention. One of them was Mapetla Mohapi, a former leader

of SASO. The lives of the other political prisoners are also in danger.

An international campaign in defense of these political prisoners is needed to save their lives and to demand that the apartheid regime release them. This is a particularly important task in countries like the United States, Britain, France, West Germany, and Japan, which have major investments in South Africa or which provide Pretoria with military aid.

## Currency Speculation and the Capitalist Economic Crisis

### Why the Pound and Lira Are Sinking

By Ernest Mandel

[The following article was published in the September 22 issue of *Rood*, the Flemish-language weekly of the Revolutionary Workers League, Belgian section of the Fourth International. The translation is by *Intercontinental Press*.]

\* \* \*

Currency speculation has been in the news for months now. The English pound and the French franc have been the foremost victims of it. The pound has been falling constantly, and the French franc has been hard hit. The Belgian franc, also, has been repeatedly threatened. What is the source of this speculation?

Above all, the speculation reflects the collapse of the international monetary system, which has been a fact since the dollar ceased to be convertible into gold. But it is also one of the causes of this collapse. Its essential source is the general inflation of all currencies, and the different rates of inflation that characterize these currencies.

At the moment, the currencies are free-floating. That is, their rate of exchange is determined by the law of supply and demand. When a country has an inflation rate that is higher than the average, it is going to have a deficit in its balance of payments. That is to say, the supply of this currency on the money market exceeds the demand. Therefore, its rate of exchange will go down as against the more stable currencies.

But when a country has a level of inflation below the average, then it will tend to have a surplus in its balance of payments. The demand for this currency exceeds the supply. Its rate of exchange will therefore go up in relation to the other currencies.

Commercial transactions take place regularly on the world market involving exports and imports. At the same time, a

number of noncommercial transactions take place that involve the transfer of currency from one country to another—the export of capital, repatriation of profits from capital invested in foreign countries; tourism; remissions from foreign workers to their families; payment for various services such as sea and air transport, insurance premiums, etc. Every capitalist company knows the amount of money it is going to have to transfer abroad in the months ahead. When it expects that a foreign currency is going to decline in value, it will try to delay the payments it has to make in this currency as long as possible. When it expects that a foreign currency is going to go up in value, it will make its payments as quickly as possible. These anticipatory movements sharpen the fluctuations in exchange rates.

At present, there are three categories of inflation rates in the imperialist countries:

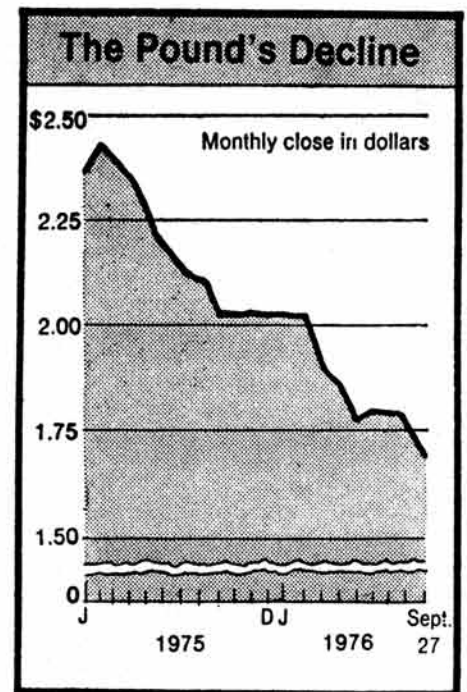
*A low inflation rate of 5% in Switzerland and the United States (although the inflation rate in the U.S. is again showing a tendency to exceed 5%).*

*An inflation rate of roughly 8 to 10% in the Benelux countries, Japan, Sweden, Austria, Denmark, Canada, and France (where the rate is moving above 10%).*

*An inflation rate of roughly 15% in Great Britain, Italy, and Spain.*

In the capitalist jungle therefore, the speculators inevitably set their sights on a rise in the price of Swiss francs and German marks and on a decline in the English pound, the lira, and the French franc.

However, while speculation is the result of inflation, it also tends to reinforce inflation. In fact, a pronounced decline in a currency involves a general rise in the price of imported products. Over the last two decades, the internationalization of production in the capitalist countries has greatly increased. When the currency of a country declines in relation to those of



New York Times

countries from which it imports heavily, then higher prices will have to be paid for these products in terms of the national currency. This accentuates the rise of all prices on the domestic market and thus the increase in the cost of living.

It might seem at first glance that higher prices for imported products would result in import reductions favoring "national industry." Thus, you might think that the English pound and the Italian lira would encourage the export of English and Italian products, since these goods would be cheaper abroad. That is why the British and Italian bourgeoisies have already been accused of promoting the depreciation of "their" currencies so as to strengthen their competitive positions.

In reality, things do not happen so mechanically. First of all, some imported products cannot be substituted for, at least in the short run. These include certain raw materials and machines or other products that are the result of specialized production techniques. No one seriously considers reducing imports of petroleum or uranium when the price of such imports rises by 10% as a result of the depreciation of the French franc. You just have to pay more. And these higher prices further increase the inflationary trend in Great Britain, Italy, and France.

Secondly, if any country gains an advantage on the world market through lower export costs resulting from depreciation of its currency, this very quickly brings on protective and retaliatory measures from its leading competitors. The economic recession has sharpened the competitive struggle, which is turning into

a trade war. Thus, recently the United States has informed Japan that it will not tolerate an invasion of its market by Japanese products as a result of the depreciation of the yen. It is going to tell the same thing to French, Italian, and British exporters (and in the near future to the Belgian and Dutch ones).

Finally, speculation is associated with *capital flight*. The balance of payments of a country is not necessarily the reflection of its trade balance. A high rate of inflation can very easily bring with it a deficit in the balance of trade (as has been the case, for example, in the U.S. and Canada). However, if the country in question is seen as a "refuge" because of its greater political and social stability, then foreign capital may flow in in great quantities and restore the balance of payments. Thus, large amounts of capital have been leaving Italy, Spain, and France, and not just for Switzerland and West Germany but also for the U.S. (From Portugal the outflow of capital went primarily to Brazil.) Paradoxically, such a capital inflow does little to improve the competitive position of the country in question, unless it is invested productively and this results in an improvement of the average productivity of labor.

The rash of currency speculation testifies to a deepening of the crisis of the Common Market and further aggravates this. The Common Market in fact is only a customs agreement. That is, it is only a first step toward economic integration that in the long run may not survive the sharpening competitiveness in international trade. This threat arises from the long-term decline in the average rate of growth. Therefore, the champions of European capitalist integration advocate a currency union as the next step. This is supposed to be the basis for developing and maintaining a common economic and financial policy as well as a common political policy. That is, it is supposed to bring about a real supernational bourgeois state with an effective executive power.

A currency union—in one or more stages—would mean the fusion of the European currencies into one, a currency union with the pooled reserves of the nine countries. But as the spread between the inflation rates of the various member states of the Common Market widens, more and more of them are going to have serious deficits in their balance of payments. Therefore, the "rich" member states (among others, West Germany) more and more hesitate to put their reserves in a pool so that they can be drained by those partners with balance of payments deficits.

Against this background, the perspective of a fusion of the European currencies is fading. But there is now an attempt to find an intermediary solution, the tying together of the currencies of the richest member states so that they float together against

other major currencies in the famous "snake." This is supposed to hasten the integration of these five countries, even while for the moment it means shoving the "poor relations" (Italy, Great Britain, Denmark, and Ireland) aside. But now we have seen that the French franc in its turn has had to leave the "snake." We may wonder how long it will be before it is the turn of the Belgian franc or the Dutch guilder. In this case, the "rich" member states would be reduced to West Germany alone. All the rest would be "poor relations." Thus, the hope for monetary unity is fading into the far future, unless the situation (and the German political orientation) changes spectacularly in the coming years.

As long as capitalism exists, economic crises and class struggle are inevitable. The capitalists who ceaselessly preach accommodation and halting the class struggle to the unions and the workers are in fact, through these arguments and soothing speeches, waging a relentless class struggle. Their aim is to swell their profits. In freezing wages, "restraining" demands, and preaching the need for "sobriety," the bosses and their political representatives claim to be defending "monetary stability" and the "general interest" (or the national interest). Actually, they are only defending their money bags.

It is utopian to hope for an "equal" restraint on wages, prices, and profits. Not one capitalist government has yet succeeded in imposing strict control over prices. On the other hand, control of wages

is quite easy if the union leaders make a deal, and the workers let them get away with it. The result is predictable—a relative (or even absolute) decline in wages.

The British workers have learned about this process through painful experience, and it should be a lesson to the workers movement in all countries. In order "to break out" of the so-called wage-price spiral, they agreed to limit their demands to a straight 4 or 5%, while inflation developed that exceeded that percentage. The upshot was a decrease in their buying power of more than 5%! Was rising unemployment at least stemmed? No, by no means. There are now one and a half million persons out of work! Was inflation overcome? Absolutely not. Despite the modest 5% wage increases, inflation has risen to 15%. This is the fault of the currency speculators, the bleeding hearts complain. But where is it written that the workers, who have nothing to do with such things, are obliged to pay the costs of capitalist mismanagement and cheating, including currency speculation?

What is the moral of this tale? Unionists, batten down the hatches! Don't trade your gains for vague promises. Defend the jobs and wages of your comrades uncompromisingly. And fight to end the capitalist system. Otherwise you are going to be confronted more and more with "choosing" between the devil and the deep blue sea, between massive unemployment and falling wages. In fact, you will get unemployment and lower wages *at one and the same time.* □

## Deutscher Prize Won by Wlodzimierz Brus

The Isaac Deutscher Memorial Prize for 1976 has been awarded to Professor Wlodzimierz Brus for his book *Socialist Ownership and Political Systems* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1975). The prize, first presented in 1969 to Martin Nicolaus, confers a monetary award of £100.

Brus taught at the Warsaw School of Planning and Statistics and at the University of Warsaw until his dismissal in 1968. His other works translated into English include *The Market in a Socialist Economy* and *On the Economics and Politics of Socialism*, also published by Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Professor Brus will give the Isaac Deutscher Memorial Lecture on the subject of "Polish October—Twenty Years After" at a time and place to be announced.

The next Deutscher Memorial Prize will be awarded in the fall of 1977. Works, whether published or in typescript, should be submitted by May 1, 1977, to: The Isaac Deutscher Memorial Prize, c/o Lloyds Bank, 68 Warwick Square, London SW1, England.

This year's jury consisted of Perry

Anderson, E.H. Carr, Tamara Deutscher, Eric Hobsbawm, Monty Johnstone, Ralph Miliband, and John Westergaard. □

## East German Regime Builds 900-Mile Wall

The Stalinist regime in East Germany is building a 900-mile-long barrier system along its border with West Germany. The barrier, which is about two-thirds completed, will run from the Baltic Sea in the north to Czechoslovakia in the south. Its cost is estimated at \$415,000 per kilometer, or more than \$622 million for the whole project.

The system is designed to prevent the East Germans who want to leave from doing so. It includes a nine-foot-high fence studded with antipersonnel mines, a ditch to prevent vehicles from being driven through the fence, a plowed strip of soft earth on which footprints or tireprints would be visible, and a system of watch-towers topped by machine guns.

## The Life of Mao Tsetung and the Effects of His Death

[The following article appeared in the September 28 issue of *October Review*, a Trotskyist monthly magazine published in Hong Kong. The translation is by Jane Tam.]

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Mao Tsetung, the chairman of the Chinese Communist party, is dead. This news has evoked a strong reaction from people of all persuasions around the world. Everyone is watching closely, trying to assess the effects of his death in China and internationally.

Behind the polite telegrams of condolence, Western bourgeois politicians have not concealed their concern. Will Mao's heirs continue to pursue his foreign policy?

In the eyes of the bourgeoisie, Mao's worth was obviously weighed differently and he played different roles in different periods: in the civil war, in the Korean War, in the "Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution," and in the period just prior to his death.

On the other hand, the great mass of the proletariat and the revolutionary intellectuals are mainly interested in arriving at a correct assessment of Mao's political career in light of the facts of the history of the Chinese revolution. They also seek, on the basis of class relationships in China today, to assess the effects of Mao's death so as to set their course and elaborate a strategy of struggle.

Here is our point of view.

It is undeniable that Mao Tsetung was one of the most influential figures of the past half century in China. He made many errors, which led to many defeats, from the time of the development of the CCP up to the long period after its victory. He played different roles at different times.

During the May 4 period [in 1919], he participated as a revolutionist, dissatisfied with the situation at that time, in the then progressive struggle trying to change society.

In the 1925-27 revolution, Mao was not one of the leading figures. Like them, however, he carried out the directives of the Stalinized Comintern, abandoning the organizational and political independence of the CCP. He himself wholeheartedly joined the Kuomintang and became one of its officials.

This opportunistic policy of collaboration between the CCP and the KMT, of collaboration between classes, led to the loss of an extremely favorable revolutionary situation and aided the formation of the KMT military dictatorship.

After the decline of the revolutionary

tide, Mao and many of the leading CCP cadres did not learn the real lesson of the defeat. They did not understand the error of the Stalinist theory of the "bloc of four classes," and did not reject Stalin's international leadership. On the contrary, they wholeheartedly carried out Stalin's putschist line in the period of revolutionary ebb.

Following repeated defeats of the uprisings, Mao abandoned the cities and turned to the countryside to carry out armed struggle. Encircled by the powerful KMT army, the CCP finally had to retreat from the Kiangsi Central District and withdraw to Shensi. In the 20 thousand *li* [6,600 mile] Long March, the Red Army lost 90 percent of its troops.

The Long March demonstrated the inexhaustible spirit of struggle of Mao and his comrades, as well as the blood-soaked crimes of Chiang Kai-shek. But it also made clear the defeat of the line put forward by Mao and the CCP for armed struggle in the countryside during a period of revolutionary ebb.

Fortunately, the CCP was able to replenish itself with new forces. This was mainly due to its progressive land reform policy in the areas it controlled, which coincided with the interests of the peasants. The CCP continued to exist and develop. It preserved a great number of its cadres who had gone through the experience of armed struggle. This proved to be a great strength in its later expansion. In January 1935, at the Tsunyi Conference, Mao was elected chairman of the CCP, a post he continued to hold until his death.

At the beginning of the resistance war against Japan, the CCP, led by Mao, seized the opportunity afforded by the rising national liberation movement and threw all of its forces into the struggle. The continued participation of the oppressed masses in the war against Japan led to a wide understanding among the masses of the reactionary nature of the KMT.

At that time the CCP's propaganda called for "communism." This naturally led the masses to accept the CCP's leadership. The CCP once again became a mass party, capable of intervening as a major force in historical events.

During the Anti-Japanese War, Mao continued to pursue his military strategy, enriching the tactics of guerrilla warfare. At the same time, the "mass line" he emphasized in practice was the prerequisite for the CCP's achieving its major expansion in the wartime period.

As a political leader, however, Mao did not shake off the influence of Stalin. On

the contrary, as a conscientious Stalinist he not only accepted Stalin's leadership but executed Stalinist policy in practice. He also transplanted the Stalinist bureaucratic system into the CCP.

In the early period of the Anti-Japanese War, he laid down the policy of the "National United Front," discontinuing the land reform movement, abolishing the soviets, reorganizing the Red Army under the control of "Generalissimo" Chiang Kai-shek, and calling for "support to Chairman Chiang" and the KMT government.

At the same time, he directed the revolutionary Chinese masses to accept this line, which meant accepting the reactionary Chiang regime and Chiang's leadership in the war against Japan. This demonstrated that he had not in fact drawn the lessons of the experience of the defeat of the second Chinese revolution. That is, that the proletariat and its party must maintain their political and organizational independence. Thus, he objectively played the role of deceiving the people for the benefit of the KMT, which led to many unnecessary defeats.

In fact, the aim of the political line laid down by Mao was to fight for the formation of a "coalition government," based on the "bloc of four classes." Mao assigned to this coalition government the job of leading the anti-Japanese struggle and solving the revolutionary democratic tasks (national independence, unification of the country, and land reform).

But this "coalition government" was supposed to acknowledge the authority of Chiang's reactionary leadership from the beginning of the Anti-Japanese War. That is to say, Mao's theory at that time was to expect a government that was a bourgeois dictatorship to accomplish the democratic tasks of the Chinese revolution. In reality, the actual path of historical development was just the opposite of what Mao expected.

In the whole course of the Anti-Japanese War, the contending classes did not succeed in forming a coalition of the whole people. On the contrary, the entire bourgeoisie (including its so-called nationalist wing) demonstrated its thoroughly decadent character. It took advantage of the Anti-Japanese War to enrich itself at the expense of the nation. The bourgeoisie sought to choose its imperialist master, while maintaining a deep hatred for the armed people and the CCP. After 1939, it united with all the reactionary forces, even including the Japanese imperialists, to recklessly attack the armed people.

The revolutionary worker, peasant, and intellectual masses increasingly understood that they must abandon the illusion of alliance with the bourgeoisie and the KMT. They should, instead, maintain their own independence in the Anti-Japanese War, with an understanding that the national struggle should be combined with the class struggle.

Under these circumstances, Mao Tse-tung was forced by the reality of the class struggle to lead his party in making a turn. He changed the servile policy of acknowledging the authority of the KMT leadership. He also pointed out the decadence and undependable nature of the bourgeoisie and called for the masses to unite under the leadership of the CCP to fight for a proletarian leadership in the Anti-Japanese War.

This turn basically corresponded to the aspirations of the revolutionary masses for an independent struggle in the Anti-Japanese War. It also stabilized the CCP's precarious situation in the wartime period and provided the essential basis for its growth. These turns by Mao are praiseworthy.

But this is not to say that Mao completely abandoned Stalinism and entered onto the Marxist road. That did not happen. The historical facts show that while making these turns, Mao vigorously maintained his original line for leading the worker-peasant masses. He continued to fight for a "coalition government," which was to be composed of the KMT, the petty-bourgeois parties, and the CCP.

Mao's ideology is clearly shown in his pamphlets *On Coalition Government* and *On New Democracy*. Here he proposed to develop China into a "New Democratic" country. The main difference between the "New Democracy" and the "old democracy" was that the leading power was to be held by the proletariat through its party instead of by the bourgeoisie. This policy of Mao's was based on the assumptions that "The Chinese people do not have at hand sufficient economic conditions to make possible the realization of a socialist state"; and that "New Democracy" would be approved by all classes in Chinese society. The role of the CCP was to be to regulate the social contradictions in the stage of "New Democracy." Mao concluded that "under such regulation, these classes together will construct the political, economic, and cultural basis of a New Democratic nation."

Consequently, in his "General Program," Mao directed the Chinese revolutionists to facilitate the formation of a government mainly based on the workers and peasants. The main tasks of this worker-peasant regime, however, were not to open up the proletarian revolution and expropriate the property of the exploiting class, but to maintain the private-property system over society, merely regulating the contradictions of the classes.

Mao's "General Program" referred to

above was meant to be realized when the Anti-Japanese War was over. In the meantime Mao called for a regime that would be "... a temporary democratic government with a democratic program to be formed by members of the KMT, CCP, the Democratic League, and members at large."

That is, the premise for forming his "coalition government" did not include overthrowing the KMT, but called for uniting with it. It meant uniting first with Chiang's reactionary forces.

Holding this erroneous line, the CCP under Mao's leadership failed for a long period to take advantage of the favorable situation at the end of the Anti-Japanese War in which oppressed people were rising up. The CCP did not meet this opportunity by calling for a worker-peasant revolution to overthrow Chiang's power. On the contrary, Mao proposed a series of negotiations with Chiang to parley for the "coalition government" the CCP had demanded.

Despite Mao's "kindliness and generosity" toward Chiang's regime, based on the spirit of "regulating the class contradictions," Chiang's stubborn answer was to push ahead with his "Bandit Suppression" civil war. This led to many enormous defeats suffered by the revolutionary army under Mao. It also accelerated the rising demand of the masses to definitively overthrow Chiang Kai-shek.

Faced with the need to ensure its own survival, and under pressure from the masses, Mao again led the CCP in a new turn. It would seek the overthrow of the KMT regime and carry out a democratic reform in the "liberated areas" (land reform and reorganization of the party structure). This enabled the CCP to seize the power under these favorable conditions: the total disintegration of the bourgeois forces, the inability of the American imperialists to carry out an armed intervention, and the mass uprising.

It is worth noting that on the eve of taking power, Mao called on the working class in Chiang's territory only to "protect the factories," while waiting quietly for the "liberation."

The victory of the 1949 revolution proved that Mao's idea of forming a "coalition government" with Chiang's KMT was a serious blunder. Lacking the courage to admit this, and unable to learn the lesson that in the fire of class struggle social conflicts are irreconcilable, Mao and the CCP continued to practice his "New Democracy" theory.

But Mao's illusions were quickly shaken by the reality of class relationships. Under the combined attack of foreign and domestic bourgeois forces, he was forced to make a turn. He abandoned his "New Democracy" theory to form a workers and peasants government directly leading to the socialist revolution in which the

private-property system was replaced by nationalized ownership.

From the above, authentic revolutionists can draw the following conclusions:

1. In the long struggle with the landlords and the bourgeoisie, Mao frequently initiated policy changes in the CCP at critical moments. These shifts turned precarious situations into favorable ones. Finally, in an exceptionally favorable class-struggle situation, the worker and peasant masses, led by the CCP, overthrew the landlords and the bourgeoisie and swept away enormous obstacles to the future development of the revolution.

All this shows that Mao in his actual practice pushed forward and led the revolution. This achievement has definitely secured him and his party an outstanding place in the history of the Chinese revolution.

2. His policy changes were not accomplished through adherence to Marxism but were the product of empiricism. As a consequence, Mao and his party proved unable to completely absorb the historical lessons or to avoid subsequent blunders. Hence, the workers and peasants repeatedly paid high prices and were compelled to make sacrifices for the CCP's erroneous policies.

The most serious of Mao's errors has been the bureaucratic party system he built, which stifles and suppresses the Marxist tendency within the party and restrains the full self-mobilization of the proletariat outside the party.

3. As a result of the working class's inability to fully assert itself, in the course of the revolutionary process after the seizure of power the CCP was able to easily and naturally change the relationship of forces between itself and the masses. Relying on bureaucratic measures, it was able to convert an alliance between the leaders and the masses into an opposition between the rulers and the ruled. Mao became the chief representative and the central figure of this ruling caste.

4. Mao's ideology and his lifelong activities demonstrate that he was not an authentic, conscious Marxist and Leninist, but basically a Stalinist.

We consider point three above to be particularly important. In fact, the expropriation of private property and the nationalizations by the CCP were carried out on the one hand through a policy of "compensation," and on the other hand through "Joint Private-State Management." The latter was an alliance with the original managers. This shows that right from the beginning the CCP consciously rejected or weakened the role of the proletariat in the supervision and management of production.

In addition, the CCP excluded the proletariat from exercising power at the state level in planning production or distribution. This in turn strengthened the bureaucratic privileged layer, which acts as a parasite on the foundations of

nationalized property, manipulating the state power to protect its own political and economic privileges.

Thus, we have seen the social conflict in new China develop primarily as the conflict between the worker-peasant masses and the privileged bureaucratic caste. From that moment on, Mao's attention turned to "how to construct new China," and "how to manage the internal contradictions among the people." The people, in return, made a new appraisal of Mao in light of his actions in dealing with the new social contradictions.

The facts show that Mao knew that the new society he ruled would introduce new conflicts. In response to Khrushchev's "de-Stalinization" moves, Mao proposed the method of "dealing with nonantagonistic contradictions among the people." He ignored Trotsky's analysis of the bureaucracy's rule in Russia, and covered up the intensity of the conflicts between the bureaucratic caste and the people within the new society.

Mao planned to use the "mild wind and gentle rain" method of piecemeal reform to solve the conflicts. He proposed to "Let the people speak out." He called on everyone to "speak their minds fully" and promised "no punishment for criticism." He hoped that use of the democratic practice of letting people "speak bitterness" would placate the people's deep dissatisfaction with the bureaucratic ruling caste.

But Mao quickly repudiated his proposal, which the people had taken as a promise. The demands from left and right were clearly illustrated in the "speak out." Lin Hsi-ling, a left representative, demanded the abolition of the bureaucratic system and the complete realization of socialist democracy. Lo Lung-chi, the right-wing representative, demanded the restoration of the capitalist system.

Since infringing on the special privileges of the new bureaucratic caste and exceeding the narrow limits of the reform were inadmissible, the CCP Central Committee rejected both demands and mercilessly suppressed them as "poisonous weeds." The CCP's explanation for the repression was that the "speak out" movement had been a "trick" to get the "poisonous weeds" out in the open where they could be cut down. This was a betrayal of the promise to the masses.

Following this, Mao's attention turned to economic construction. He announced the "General Line" for the Great Leap Forward and the people's communes, calling on the whole country to "go all out, aim high and achieve greater, faster, better and more economical results in building socialism" in new China.

However, this campaign, known as the "Three Red Banners," resulted in economic confusion and sharp declines in production, seriously upsetting balanced development in every department of the economy. It led to growing disparities between supply and demand for items of daily need

and placed increased hardships on the people by lowering their living standards. These were powerful factors preventing the masses from actively participating in production.

When this social crisis reached the point of explosion, the CCP Central Committee retreated. Mao was forced to take a back seat and share part of his power with Liu Shao-ch'i. The bureaucratic caste took advantage of the concessions it had to make to the people at this time to further fortify its power and interests on the foundation laid down by Mao. This was why [even after the setbacks of the Great Leap Forward] the bureaucracy made a show of "support" to the policy of the "Three Red Banners," as it had done from the beginning.

Consequently, the conflicts of the new society have been developing along a path of intensifying sharpness. In the period when Liu Shao-ch'i was in power, the economic wounds of the country were healed and there was even economic progress. But the bureaucratic caste became twice as corrupt as it had been before.

In the events outlined above, Mao's role was contradictory and complicated. On the one hand, having laid down all the policies of the CCP Central Committee, he had to take the main responsibility for them. On the other hand, Mao frequently expressed his criticism of the bureaucracy and his intention to engage in a struggle with what he claimed was a "bourgeois" influence within the CCP.

In fact, this so-called bourgeoisie was nothing but the privileged bureaucratic elements attached to the state political and economic structure. Their political and economic privileges had been given to them by the CCP under Mao's leadership. And they are the natural product of the CCP's political system.

According to Mao's theory, the appearance of this bureaucratic privileged strata is the result of the entry of an alien class into the CCP. This is nothing but a cover-up of the reality. If Mao's theory were correct, then it would only be necessary for the Chinese toiling masses and the honest CCP members to seize back the power held by the alien class. But this privileged bureaucratic strata is like a cancer that continues to grow in the ruling structure.

Thus Mao's political system calls into being innumerable devils who cannot be exorcized. His demand for a purge of the bourgeoisie within the party not only lacks sincerity but has no effect at all in abolishing privileges. In reality it is only a pretext for the bureaucratic elements to doubly exploit the working people.

For a long time, the Chinese working people, especially the revolutionary youth, all looked up to Mao as an enlightened leader. In particular, they expected him to lead them in revolutionizing Chinese life, in realizing the system of popularly elected communes he had promised in the initial

stage of the "Cultural Revolution," during the struggle against bureaucratic privilege.

But Mao's real practice disappointed them. Mao's "three-in-one" policy [constructing "Revolutionary Committees" through equal representation of the army, the party, and the masses] clearly reflected his reluctance to change the CCP and state bureaucratic system. Mao definitely stood with his colleagues who had become a bureaucratic caste. He used his prestige to act as the most influential protector of this privileged layer.

The facts show that at the beginning of the mass "mobilization," Mao cautiously used the slogan "Grasp revolution, promote production" to channel the power of the working class and the peasants into laboring activity. At most, Mao promoted only the movement of "revolt" among the youth. When this kind of movement exceeded or threatened to exceed the limits he had set, he immediately suppressed and attacked it. Mao's so-called political revolution therefore became a theory that misled and blunted the revolutionary direction of the struggle.

Mao's "antisuperpower" foreign policy is politically the logical product of his "socialism in one country." In practice it is a betrayal of the historical interests of the proletariat. His blunders on this question have greatly weakened his influence in the world proletarian movement, making him an intimate friend and ally of the imperialists in their dealings with the Soviet Union and the other workers states.

Furthermore, since Mao recovered the power to unilaterally decide CCP and state policy, the deepening conflicts gave him less and less room for maneuver, even though he tried to pose as an impartial arbiter who stood above the party's inner struggle.

Because of this apprehension generated by the experience of the "Red Guard movement," which went beyond his "directives," he turned to the top hierarchy of the CCP. There he sought compromise solutions to all problems, to be carried out under his supervision.

The rights of the masses outside the party and of the lower strata of the party itself were limited to supporting decisions made by the "Party Central Committee" and their decisive intervention in the struggle within the party was not permitted.

The movements initiated by Mao—such as the movement to criticize Lin Piao and Confucius, the movement to reject the Confucian scholars and uphold the Legalists, the movement to criticize the novel *Water Margin*, and the recent movement to purge Teng Hsiao-p'ing—show that on every question he is united with the social caste and its representatives whom he once attacked.

Mao called on this social layer to practice self-denial, and to repudiate the leading cadres among them that Mao



considered unfit, especially notorious, or as holding dissenting views.

In this situation, all factions sought to act in Mao's name and to utilize his prestige. All the bureaucratic abuses grew under Mao's protection. And Mao had to pay a substantial price to obtain the "compromise" within the party: by becoming the official representative of the Central Committee he came to be the focal point of dissatisfaction among the people.

In the Tien An Men incident, the masses pointed their finger at Mao and the CCP Central Committee. Dissatisfaction was demonstrated in a public action by the masses.

This was a very serious development. A man who had been a great historical figure, a leader who had been expected by the broad masses to lead them to the gradual elimination of social inequality and the creation of socialism, was shown incapable in action of uniting with the masses for socialist democracy.

In addition, because of his inability to shake off the ideology of Stalinism, etc., he finally became the target for the grievances of the working masses.

He ended by placing himself in a position that was just the opposite of what he had hoped to be in his youth.

Owing to Mao's irreplaceable role in the party and to the unresolved struggle within the party at the time of his death, his passing will undoubtedly hasten the crisis of leadership and the emergence of an intensified power struggle.

However, it must be understood that while the factions within the bureaucratic caste contend with one another, they have the same fundamental interests.

Traces of past disputes could be seen during Mao's illness, even though the CCP high command sought to appear "united" through the temporary compromise between the so-called radical faction and the so-called moderate faction.

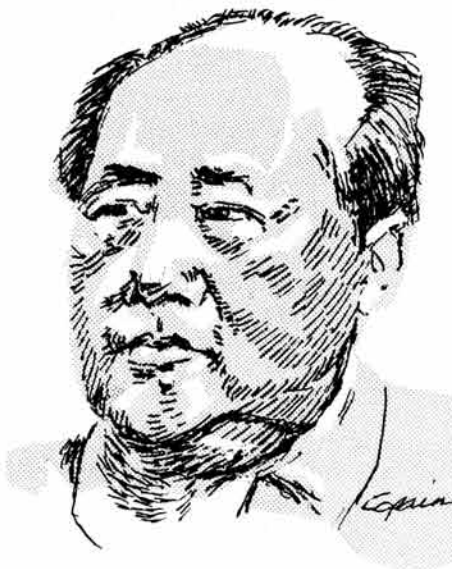
During the memorial meetings, the provinces, cities, and districts all expressed their "faithful adherence" to the Central Committee. This reflected the awareness of the top cadres of the need to maintain an appearance of calm after the loss of their guiding center. The hidden message is that in the not too distant future, they will form a temporary leading group to run the country in the name of "collective leadership."

The future leading group will at the beginning follow for the most part Mao's original policy, especially in foreign affairs. It will continue to maintain the "against the two superpowers" line and will do all it can to put up an "intransigent" front toward Moscow.

This is absolutely not to say that the CCP will have a long period of internal stability. This is not to say that its internal and external policies will remain unchanged for an extended period. It is also not to say that it will succeed in stabilizing its rule. On the contrary, the

internal party struggle will be intensified.

Because of the intensification of the social contradictions (the conflicts among the bureaucratic elements and the increased conflicts between the bureaucratic



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caste and the workers and peasants), the CCP's internal policy will resemble the swings of a pendulum. The counterposed pressures of the contending factions in the top echelons will at first to some degree weaken the regime's intervention in international events. Its rule will be shaken for a long time to come, continually having to confront the intervention of the worker and peasant revolutionary masses. If Mao, when he was alive, could barely hold the contradictions in check, then after the loss of this centralizing force how can it be expected that centrifugal tendencies will not arise that will pursue their own needs and interests in conflict with other tendencies?

One of the direct effects of Mao's death is the weakening of the power of the Central Committee. In fact the reason for initiating the "respect Ch'in Shih-huang [China's first emperor] movement" when Mao was alive was because of the weakening of the central power as a result of the internal split. This was also a reflection of the central leadership's difficulty in having its directives carried out.

We also saw the need for the regime to use the pressure of the press and its executive authority (the transferring of the army commanders) to protect the central power.

Thus, the death of Mao must weaken the power of the Central Committee. At present, officials at every level have to strive for a share of the central power while protecting their existing prerogatives through a thousand maneuvers.

This greatly complicates the internal life of the CCP.

The other direct effect of Mao's death is the weakening of the so-called radical faction. The base of this faction in the CCP is really very weak. In the past, its control of the whole propaganda apparatus of the Central Committee and its ability to make itself heard and promote its theories was based on the monolithic power of Mao within the party. Having lost that support, the roles of these leaders will be remarkably changed in the future—if they maintain their positions.

They will no longer be the exponents of the "highest directives." Therefore they will be in a worse position than before. It will be more difficult to attract the masses outside the party or the lower party ranks to their faction. However, it may be possible for them, in their isolated condition, to compromise with the "moderate faction" and gradually dispose of their appearance as a "left" tendency.

The above analysis and appraisal are drawn from the direct effects of Mao's death. The present situation in China is very complex. In particular, the decisive class, the workers, have yet to make known their intentions and direction in a definite pattern of action. It is not, therefore, possible to now predict the concrete outlines of future developments. But of some things we can be certain:

The Chinese leadership (whether it is held by either of the two factions or by both together) will not permit the masses or the members of the CCP to intervene in the affairs of its hierarchy. It will rely more on "public safety" measures to suppress the masses, making its rule more monolithic. It is possible, in the interests of stabilizing its rule, that the leadership will grant meager concessions to the masses, such as an improvement in their living standards or an increase in the degree of democracy permitted.

In the future the regime will swing back and forth between periods of intensification of the internal struggle, as the factions compete for power, and periods of temporary alliance between the factions to facilitate dealing with the masses.

In conclusion, the epoch of having only one "highest directive" and looking up to a single leader is definitely gone. "China is no longer the China of yore."

Today a more favorable situation is unfolding for Chinese revolutionists. Their calls for improving the people's living standards, their calls for fighting for the rights of socialist democracy, will find a greater response and support among the masses.

Alongside the development of the revolutionary mass movement, revolutionists will build an authentic Leninist and Marxist party, based on a correct program, to lead the masses in the overthrow of the existing bureaucratic dictatorship. This revolution will establish a genuine proletarian dictatorship based on socialist democracy and will march on to the socialist future. □

## Corsican Autonomists Face Growing Police Persecution

By F.L. Derry

For months French political commentators had been promising a "long hot summer" in Corsica. The prediction has proved entirely justified. The Corsican political situation has been marked by a sharp turn toward violent confrontations, and in this context the government has escalated its repression. Such well-known journals as the Paris daily *Le Monde* have begun to use the term "Irelandization" to describe the new events.

By the first week of September, nearly one hundred militant advocates of autonomy for Corsica had been jailed in dragnet-type raids hitting a dozen different organizations.

The turn toward confrontation began on August 22, the first anniversary of the police attack on an autonomist protest in the town of Aleria (see *Intercontinental Press*, September 15, 1975, p. 1194).

### Protest Against Wine Swindlers

That action, the occupation of a vineyard, was led on August 21, 1975, by Edmond Simeoni, then the leader of the largest group calling for autonomy, the Action pour la Renaissance de la Corse (ARC—Action for the Rebirth of Corsica).

Demonstrators from the ARC occupied the Depeille wine cellars, charging the owner, a former member of the French settler community in Algeria, with running a crooked operation producing adulterated wine. They demanded the arrest of the wine swindlers, seizure of their goods, and distribution of their land "under community control" to the poorest farmers in the region.

Simeoni hoped to be able to negotiate with the authorities. However, the day after the occupation began, 2,000 troops, backed up by armored vehicles and six Puma helicopters, launched a military assault to retake the wine cellars. In the course of the attack, two policemen were killed.

Five days after the incidents in Aleria, the ARC, until then a legal and nonviolent organization, was banned. The night following the announcement of the ban, clashes developed between protesters and police in the main Corsican industrial and commercial center of Bastia, during which one policeman was killed.

On June 22 this year, after a showcase trial, Edmond Simeoni was sentenced to five years in prison for his part in the Aleria incidents. Two weeks after this, Serge Cacciari, charged with the death of a policeman killed in a battle with crowds in

Bastia, was sentenced to ten years.

Thus, the first anniversary of the Aleria occupation became a logical date for protests against French repression of the movement for Corsican autonomy. August 22 was also the date that the Associu di Patrioti Corsi (APC—Association of Corsican Patriots) held its first congress. This organization was formed in February with the aim of replacing the ARC as a broad grouping waging a political fight for Corsican autonomy. According to the August 24 *Le Monde*, 5,000 members and sympathizers attended the first day's sessions.

The keynote political report, given by Lucien Alfonsi on the opening of the gathering, was summarized as follows in *Le Monde*:

He criticized the government and the majority supporting the president, from whom he said nothing could be hoped. At the same time, he criticized the opposition—The Communist party, which, he said, "is engaged in a systematic effort to denigrate the supporters of autonomy," and the Socialist party, toward which the APC "expresses reservations." M. Alfonsi said that "supporters of autonomy reject the alternative of choosing between a mafia trying to hang on to power and those attacking us in the name of an opposition that wants to take power.

M. Alfonsi said that the Communist party's emergency plan "would have been a new contribution fifteen or twenty years ago," and that "the SP plan is not acceptable" because "self-management socialism is not applicable to Corsica." He continued: "There is another road, the one advocated by the APC, of open and legal work to educate the Corsican people about the measures that can be taken to assure their survival and progress."

Thus, the congress set a peaceful tone for the anniversary of Aleria. However, during the day of August 22, Max Simeoni, former general secretary of the dissolved ARC and brother of the imprisoned leader of the Aleria occupation, left the congress, along with about fifteen other autonomists, and took over the Cohen-Skalli wine cellar. The owner of this establishment is another repatriated Algerian settler. The occupied site is in the middle of an estate of 400 hectares (one hectare = 2.47 acres) of vineyards. Cohen-Skalli owns another 1,500 hectares elsewhere in Corsica and additional land on the continent. This contrasts with the average Corsican farm of only five or six hectares.

Max Simeoni and his action group, all of whom but the leader were masked, dynam-

ited the wine cellars and processing plant, causing damage estimated in *Le Monde* at between five and six million francs (more than US\$1 million).

In a message read to the APC congress, which was still in session, Simeoni took sole responsibility for the action:

One year after the Aleria tragedy, the crooks' lands have still not been distributed to young Corsicans. M. Cohen-Skalli is not a crook, at least there are no grounds as yet for saying this. Nonetheless, he has 400 hectares of Corsican land with three wine cellars.

"Corsicanization" remains an empty word, and "de-Corsicanization" continues to strike at the very marrow of our community. The measures promised for reviving our language and culture are derisory by comparison with what has to be done in this field.

I call on all APC members to remain in legal movements. A personal action is a personal action, and I disavow in advance any similar occupation that may be carried out by APC members.

Max Simeoni's action could not fail to have a particular impact on the Corsican movement, of which he and his brother Edmond are long-standing leaders. In 1964, they formed the Comité d'Etudes et de Defense des Intérêts de la Corse (CEDIC—Committee for the Study and Defense of the Interests of Corsica). In 1967, they founded the ARC, which rapidly became the largest group in the autonomist movement, and they remained the two principal figures in it. Max Simeoni has generally been credited with being the central theoretician of Corsican autonomism. Now, after having led a mass protest organization for more than ten years, both brothers appear to have succumbed to the pressures from "armed struggle" and "guerrillaist" tendencies demanding more "dramatic" actions. Today the ARC has been dissolved, one Simeoni brother is in prison, and the other is on the run.

### 'Legals' vs. 'Undergroundists'

Terrorism is not a new problem for the Corsican movement. In fact, this movement can be said to be divided into two camps: the "legals" and the "undergroundists." In the September 10 issue of *Le Monde*, Pierre Georges wrote that there were 226 terrorist incidents in 1975, of which not all had a clear political character, and that this year promises to top that record.

Over the last year, a series of terrorist, undergroundist groups have announced their existence, including the Front de

Libération Nationale Corse (FLNC—National Liberation Front of Corsica). This group made its appearance on the night of May 4-5, when it took credit for eighteen simultaneous explosions in different parts of the island.

At the same time, right-wing French patriotic terrorist groups have appeared, which seem to have support from high government officials. Many of these groups are based on little more than anti-Italian racist demagoguery. (The French government officials have tried to blame the autonomist agitation on outsiders, particularly Italians.)

Signs of pro-French terrorist activity are readily visible, particularly in the area of Ajaccio, one of the island's two main urban centers. This city, the island's capital, has a right-wing city administration and is the main center of the Bonapartist party, which follows a policy of virulent French chauvinism.

The pressure on Corsican autonomist leaders to take "more determined" actions has been building up for some time. This was evident, for example, at the last congress the ARC held before it was banned; the sessions began on August 17, 1975, just a few days before the Aleria occupation. There is an interesting account of this gathering by Stephanu in the April 1976 issue of *Les Temps Modernes*, the magazine published by Jean-Paul Sartre.

The congress in question was the ninth one of the "legalist" ARC, and it was attended by some 8,000 persons. On Corsica, where the total population is under 300,000 and only half of these are Corsican, this meeting certainly qualified as a central political event and indicated that on the scale of the island the ARC was a mass movement.

At the time of the congress, Stephanu said, everyone expected a sharp step-up in government repression. The weekly newspaper *Arritti*, which had been the official organ of the ARC, became an independent publication so as not to be closed down if the organization was banned.

Sections of young people, especially high-school students, began pushing for "armed struggle." One such youth had painted a slogan on the stairwell of the ARC headquarters: "Make up your mind, Edmond, the fishing rod or the gun?" Stephanu reports that the congress was marked by such comments as, "It's either Tartarin or Che Guevara." (Tartarin, the leading character in a nineteenth-century novel by Alphonse Daudet, is a popular French designation for a hero who is all talk and no action.)

Halfway through the congress, Simeoni seemed to change his line, beginning to attack the "legalist" strategy. Two days later, he led his group of protesters to the wine cellar at Aleria.

But even at the time of the Aleria occupation, Simeoni did not appear to be seriously considering an armed struggle. In a statement distributed before the

"forces of order" launched their attack, he explained the strictly symbolic character of the occupation, announcing that it would last only three days, during which



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there would be public meetings and press conferences where the group could explain its demands.

Thus, the occupation seems to have been only a tactical concession to the small minority among the 8,000 persons at the congress who had a penchant for ultraleftist romanticism. However, it gave the French government the pretext it needed to launch a campaign of repression that in five days succeeded in driving the organization underground.

Writing in the May 20 issue of the Paris Trotskyist daily *Rouge*, François Gaillard and Gabriel Pietri indicated that in conceding to pressures from the most impatient elements at the ARC congress, Simeoni was caught up in a process that carried him much further than he wanted to go.

"Throwing to the winds the caution that had marked the ARC up till then, the autonomist leader launched into a peroration against the rich ex-Algerian settlers. He laid out the history of the adulterated wine cases, and, quoting Che Guevara, called for a revolutionary struggle to liberate the Corsican people. . . . The ARC of drum-thumping, singing, and high-flown words not matched by actions had just died under the buffeting of pressure from below. . . . It may be said that from that moment Aleria had become inevitable. How could you just go home quietly after saying things like that?"

After the arrests following the Aleria occupation, there was a feeling among ex-ARC members that the organization had gotten entrapped, but there seemed to be little clear understanding of where to go from there:

"The response by Poniatowski [French minister of the interior] came as a surprise, and some leaders would probably have

thought twice before gambling with the life of the movement. Many had the feeling that they fell into a trap.

"The autonomist movement responded in different ways to the loss of all legal status. Some saw in this wave of repression the proof that the state would never yield. Others, and this was true of the ARC leaders, were completely disoriented." Their past moderate perspective had not prepared them for such a harsh confrontation with the state power.

On the other hand, Pietri and Gaillard indicated, the ARC leaders' previous attempts to gain concessions through talks with the government's special representative, Liber Bou, helped to exacerbate the impatience of young activists, who finally succeeded in pushing the moderates onto a course that carried them far beyond their intentions.

#### 'Isula Morte'

The movement to defend those arrested in the aftermath of Aleria quickly became the focus of attention. "Committees to Support the Imprisoned Patriots" were set up by former members of the now illegal ARC. The Comité Anti-Repression (CAR—Antirepression Committee) was formed by the Parti Socialiste Unifié (PSU—United Socialist party, a centrist grouping), the Socialist party, the Confédération Française et Démocratique du Travail (CFDT—French Democratic Federation of Labor, an independent union organization of Catholic origins), and many smaller groups.

However, the defense campaign as well was buffeted by ultraleftist pressures. During a march to Ajaccio the "undergroundists" intervened, helping to spark violent street battles in the course of which two banks were blown up. Other attempts to build a mass defense for the prisoners met with similar problems.

Large demonstrations in defense of Simeoni did take place in April. These culminated on the opening of his trial May 17 in a day of protest titled "Isula Morte" (Dead Island), which virtually brought activity on the island to a standstill.

However, those mass actions that were called had their political focus blunted by the addition of other political issues besides the key question of the defense of the prisoners. Thus, in Corsica this summer travelers could find an impressive display of posters, inscriptions, and political slogans placed on walls by supporters of the nationalist movement. Such political appeals dominated the scene almost as much as they did in Portugal at the height of the mass mobilizations there in 1975. However, in all this display, there was hardly anything defending Simeoni.

Unfortunately, the potential for building a mass defense movement has also been neglected in the case of the second Simeoni brother, Max. In fact, even less of a campaign is being waged on his behalf.

After the second Simeoni-led occupation,

events began to move very rapidly. In a communiqué published in the August 26 issue of *Le Provençal Corse*, the Bonapartist party in Ajaccio called on the "silent majority" to demonstrate against the autonomists. But there was little apparent response.

#### The Case of Jacques Fieschi

On August 30, Jacques Fieschi, president of Strada Corsa, the Corsican truckers association, was arrested as he blocked the entrance to the ferry boat Napoléon in Ajaccio harbor. The next day, the local paper, *Le Provençal Corse* quoted him explaining his grievances: "Since the start of the summer, the cargo shipments from Propriano to the continent have been stopped. Today, I can no longer ship my four trailers from either Propriano or Ajaccio. I would have to take my chances in Porto-Vecchio."

Porto-Vecchio is on the eastern side of the island, separated from Ajaccio by a formidable chain of mountains. Fieschi, who was armed with a hunting rifle, was immediately arrested, tried, and sentenced to prison for six months. The bulk of the prison sentence was suspended, but he also got a fine and three years on parole. He had been one of those arrested for the occupation in Aleria.

There was an immediate response to Fieschi's arrest. The Comité Anti-Repression called for demonstrations in Ajaccio on September 7. Strada Corsa urged its members to attend and to bring their trucks with them. Meetings were held with leaders of many organizations, including those representing artisans, small and middle businesses, and peasants. Notable by their absence were the workers parties and unions. Nonetheless, there was every indication that there would be a large-scale mobilization in defense of Fieschi.

However, an escalation of terrorist incidents cut across the development of a mass campaign. On the night of Fieschi's trial, a bomb exploded in the car of the brother of the Prefect of Corsica, the highest French official on the island. Three days later, a bomb blew up part of the horse-racing stadium near Zonza in the south. The same night, another bomb destroyed the car and part of the home of Jacques Borghetti, president of a wine-distributing company, Corse-Mattei.

#### Provocateurs at Work

In the case of the Borghetti bombing, there were indications pointing either to a police provocation or an action by right-wing former Algerian colonists. The group claiming credit was a previously unknown one—"Action Pied-Noir." The popular name for French settlers in Algeria is "pieds noirs" (black feet). For several years, the French government has tried to

resettle the former colonists in Corsica, creating a loyalist bastion, a kind of "Corsican Ulster."

The "pieds noirs," many of whom had substantial capital, became the big wine producers. Corse-Mattei is the only important distributor of the wine produced by the small Corsican winegrowers.

In the September 9 *Rouge*, Gabriel Pietri reported that "for several days, the word has been going around the autonomist circles that the Ajaccio demonstration will mark a turn." Unfortunately, it marked a sharp increase in isolated acts of individual terrorism.

The demonstration that started to gather in Ajaccio was relatively small. The truck drivers from Strada Corsa began to line up their rigs on the road leading into the city. Roughly thirty trucks tried to go into town but were turned back by a police road-block. They then entered the airport on the outskirts, where they blocked two passenger jets on the runway. The airport

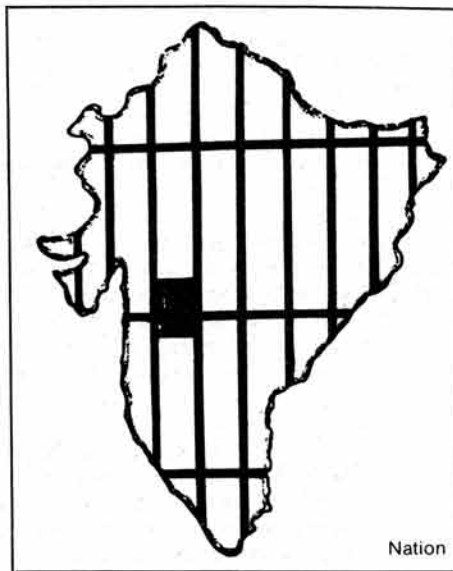
building was jammed with people being turned away from the ferryboats in the harbor that were tied up by a strike.

After hours of futile negotiations with the prefect, the truckers again tried to enter the city. A battle took place on the police barricades, and the truckers were driven back. It was at this point that five masked men entered a Boeing 707 on the runway, called on its 181 passengers to leave, and proceeded to blow up the plane with plastic explosives. This action was claimed by the "Front de Libération Nationale" (FLN—National Liberation Front).

The government seized immediately on this incident as a pretext to launch a sweeping wave of repression. Within days, eighty Corsican autonomists were in jail. Needless to say, they were not members of the FLN but leaders of every important Corsican autonomist group, of the PSU, of Strada Corsa, and of several Corsican professional groups. □

## The Case of George Fernandes

### Gandhi Prepares Frame-up of Indian Union Leader



On October 4, George Fernandes became the first prominent Indian political prisoner to be brought to trial since a state of emergency was declared in June 1975. Together with twenty-one other defendants, he is accused of having taken part in a "deep-rooted criminal conspiracy" to overthrow the dictatorship of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi.

Fernandes is the chairman of the Socialist party of India and a former president of the All-India Railwaymen's Federation. In May 1974, he led a general strike of railway workers that paralyzed the country's transport system for twenty days. Foreshadowing her later adoption of

massive repression against all opponents, Gandhi broke the strike by arresting tens of thousands of railway workers.

When Gandhi proclaimed the state of emergency on June 26, 1975, assuming dictatorial powers, Fernandes was the most important opposition leader to escape arrest. He went underground and tried to organize continued resistance to the Gandhi regime. After nearly a year of clandestine activity, he was arrested in Calcutta June 10.

In the sixteen-page charge sheet, Fernandes and his codefendants are charged with setting off explosions and carrying out other sabotage actions in several parts of the country. Gandhi apparently hopes to use the trial and the charges of sabotage as a justification for her authoritarian rule and for the continued detention without trial of the thousands of other political prisoners.

The trial is being staged as a courtroom spectacle, with 575 prosecution witnesses slated to testify. Two weeks earlier, censorship of foreign journalists was lifted to ensure that the show trial receives wide publicity.

Although Fernandes has been held in solitary confinement for four months, his spirit has not been broken. After hearing the charges against them, he and the other defendants raised their hands in the air, jangling their heavy chains. "The chains we bear before you today," Fernandes said, "are symbols of the entire nation which has been chained and fettered by dictatorship, a symbol of the infamy that has been perpetrated on our country." □

## Rising Discontent With Gandhi's Emergency Rule

[The following interview with an Indian Trotskyist was obtained by a correspondent of *Intercontinental Press* in Calcutta in early September.]

\* \* \*

*Question. The Gandhi regime has long claimed that its positions are "socialist." It tried to justify the June 26, 1975, state of emergency as a measure against "reactionaries" and for the benefit of the Indian population. Who has really benefited from this state of emergency?*

*Answer.* Gandhi's populist slogans are being exposed and the benefits of the emergency for the industrial bourgeoisie are now becoming more obvious. All the slogans connected with "socialism" are proving quite fictitious. The working class, employees in the public sector, and the peasantry are all coming to realize at whose cost the whole Indira regime is operating and how the benefits are being given to the bourgeoisie.

The greatest poison which has been spread by the CPI, CPM,<sup>1</sup> and others is actually this, that an expansion of the public sector means the regime is "socialist." The CPI is still searching for its "progressive bourgeoisie." The CPM is now unsure of whether the section of the bourgeoisie that it looks to will still play a "progressive" role.

The emergency reveals that the bourgeois regime finds itself unable to provide even limited concessions. They are intensifying their exploitation. I think the emergency should be clearly understood as a measure adopted by the astute bourgeois leadership to tide it over the gigantic problems it is facing.

*Q. How, specifically, has the state of emergency aided the bourgeoisie? What measures has the regime taken?*

A. There were several types of measures. One kind was directed against the working class, such as the compulsory deposit of wages and the cutting of bonuses. Legally, the bonuses had been considered deferred payment to help make up for price rises. But now, since the emergency, the whole principle of the bonuses has been turned around. They are now being linked to the level of a company's profit and are not viewed as deferred

wages. By cutting these bonuses, the entire working class has lost a certain amount of its income.

The authorities have also rendered all working class movements virtually illegal, in the sense that no strikes, no agitations, no propaganda can be carried out.

Theoretically, there are to be no layoffs or retrenchments [firings], but even the bourgeois ministers acknowledge every six months that there are three and a half lakhs<sup>2</sup> unemployed, then there are four lakhs unemployed, and so on.

The other side of the regime's measures are the enormous benefits and inducements which are being given the bourgeoisie, such as concessions on income tax, wealth tax, and property tax. They are being given other inducements in terms of loans, licenses, permits, and various types of production targets. They are given lots of leeway to handle their own workers.

All these things reveal that this entire emergency favors the bourgeoisie. Even the partial controlling of inflation has not benefited the people, since they are being deprived of their purchasing power and more and more of them are becoming unemployed.

*Q. How has the repression been carried out?*

A. Even before the emergency, working class struggles were often hit; there was a large amount of strikebreaking. The left groups were curbed. Thousands of Naxalites,<sup>3</sup> in particular, were arrested. CPM members were also arrested, and their trade-union and other formations were attacked.

During the preemergency period, Indira found that the bourgeoisie in some regions and a number of opposition groups were becoming more vocal and were serving as a mouthpiece, to some extent, for the mass ferment. She feared that the agitations, even those of a Gandhian type,<sup>4</sup> could lead to an explosive situation. Indira was more afraid that these groups, without realizing it, could unleash forces beyond their control. It was basically to control this that the emergency was imposed.

2. One lakh equals 100,000 units.—IP

3. The term "Naxalite" generally refers to members or supporters of the Maoist Communist party of India (Marxist-Leninist).—IP

4. Individual or mass protests in the tradition of Mahatma Gandhi, such as nonviolent civil disobedience or fasts.—IP

*Q. So in your opinion, it is not possible for the Indira regime to go back to the way it was before the state of emergency?*

A. I truly doubt it. But that does not mean that they may not stage an extremely rigged election. Because of the Congress party's role during the independence struggle, it has acquired an all-India character that other parties lack. In the context of this strength, the ruling class has in the past utilized electoral politics to divert the class struggle. And what Indira now wants, and the bourgeoisie wants, is not immediately a military regime, but a parliamentary form, with a parliament sitting, without much opposition and voicing only a bourgeois opinion.

And they would not find this difficult. There is no alternative, either bourgeois or another party of an all-India dimension, which could create an unstable situation in parliament, where a vote here or a vote there could mean dissolution.

They feel that some sort of democratic semblance is now required. They will probably do it before next October. And they will change the constitution in such a manner that the parliament will be a rubber stamp for the executive. But the rubber stamp will appear democratic.

The regime will also permit the various parties to compete in the elections, but against a background of press censorship and of paralyzing their mass bases.

The pattern has been set. It will be the same system, but with a symbolic election.

*Q. Recently, the regime has launched several repressive campaigns, such as the drive against beggars and slum dwellers in the cities and the institution of forced sterilization in several states. Could you comment on those?*

A. Because of bourgeois urbanization, big towns are emerging, becoming larger and larger, without any facilities and with big civic, employment, transport, and living problems. Like in all Third World countries, the gigantic slums and lack of employment create a whole category of poor people. The slums are explosive and numerous struggles have been launched. The bourgeoisie finds these cities and this population astir, both disrupting the normal conditions for peaceful production and creating a potential for revolutionary class struggle.

So they are now launching a new offensive. They have started to adopt the method of physically eliminating a large part of the poor. Like cattle, they are removed bodily. Particularly in the Bombay and

1. The Communist party of India and the Communist party of India (Marxist), the two largest Stalinist parties.—IP

Calcutta areas, they are put into cat-sheds somewhere at a distance. Some are taken to other places for hard work, and the rest . . . one does not know. The official principle behind this slum clearance has shifted from "removing poverty"<sup>5</sup> to "removing the poor."

Forced sterilization is a technique for throwing the blame for the poverty onto the poor themselves. But here they are touching an area of great discontent, which may have a boomerang effect. It may generate certain types of movements—not necessarily class struggle—which could usher in revolts of one or another variety. There was a revolt in Delhi, and some in Maharashtra and in Uttar Pradesh also, but we don't have a full picture. In Delhi, when the slum dwellers rebelled against the forced sterilization, the regime kept quiet so that nobody would know about it. But even after they issued a curfew for a number of days, it kept spreading. It was a very big struggle.

Ultimately, you see, it is people themselves who are becoming a problem to the bourgeoisie, and one solution is simply to eliminate them.

*Q. George Fernandes, who was a leader of the 1974 railway strike and of the Socialist party, as well as a key opposition figure, was recently arrested. Do you know anything about his treatment since he has been arrested?*

A. After his arrest, information has come out that he and his family are being tortured, that he is being put through tremendous strains of various types. And if the news is correct, he will probably be put to trial very soon.<sup>6</sup> There have been some international protests over his arrest.

There is one thing I must point out. Because our press is precensored and self-censored, we do not get much accurate information. It is extremely difficult to find out what is news and what is rumor.

*Q. What has been the situation in Gujarat since President's Rule<sup>7</sup> was imposed in March?*

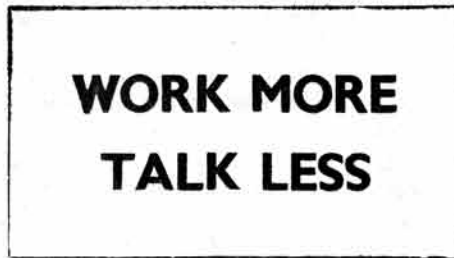
A. One pattern of opposition is the official Gandhian type. This takes the

5. During the 1971 elections, the Congress party campaigned on the slogan of "Garibi Hatao" (remove poverty).—IP

6. Since this interview was obtained, Fernandes and twenty-one others were arraigned on charges of conspiring to overthrow the government. He appeared in a New Delhi court for the first time on October 4.—IP

7. President's Rule is the imposition of direct federal control over a state or territory. It was imposed in Gujarat on March 12 after the opposition Janata Morcha (People's Front) coalition regime collapsed.—IP

form of small demonstrations and processions, with the leaders of the old opposition parties marching and sitting near the secretariat or executive offices and getting themselves arrested. But these opposition



Washington Post

Government placard, posted in cities and offices following declaration of emergency.

parties raise only populist democratic issues. They cannot take up issues which would now touch on class lines.

A new ferment is growing now in Gujarat, among tribespeople, among students, among employees, among workers, who are now facing the problems of the regime's economic policies more directly.

I feel that the opposition parties are losing their influence, because they don't want to deepen these struggles. You have what is called the Morarji Desai wing, that is, the Organisation Congress, a right-wing split from Indira's Congress. There is also the powerful rightist Swatantra party and even groups within the ruling Congress that are to the right of Indira. Then you have the Socialist party, which is almost like a small bourgeois party. Since these parties cannot carry forward the struggles, elements from these groups, who are connected in their day-to-day work with the masses, are now thinking that some alternatives must be found.

So from this angle, there is not much difference in terms of economic measures between the opposition which was thrown out and the new crew which has been imposed. Basically they are wooing the same elements, the ground-nut kulak farmers [rich peasants], the oil merchants, and the landowners in the cotton belt. That's why the real problem in Gujarat is both the opposition and the Congress.

In a sense you may say that the mass movements are to some extent experiencing a benumbing feeling and are faced with a lack of alternatives. They do not know how to move. They are not demoralized, but they are confused. It means that there is a need for a new leadership which would express their demands properly and educate them through class-struggle methods.

*Q. What about in Tamil Nadu, where President's Rule was also imposed?*

A. The situation in Tamil Nadu is a little more complex. The Dravida Kazhagam movement and the DMK<sup>8</sup> have a long history. Basically, they also represented a

certain section of the bourgeoisie, as well as some rich kulak elements in the state. This group also adopted harsh methods, and its rule did not lead to improving the conditions of the masses.

Their removal has not necessarily worsened the condition of the people; that was already deteriorating. They did not take up the stand of supporting the cause of the exploited. Their battle was a political battle against New Delhi and to gain greater power to shape certain economic policies so that the regional bourgeoisie they represented could benefit. Some Dravidian historical and cultural traditions were also involved.

I feel that the DMK regime was already becoming internally corroded. Numerous movements were springing up and the class struggle was sharpening there. That is why a section of it went over to join Indira's Congress.

The emergency has shown the skin-deep character of the "opposition" bourgeoisie, which is not ready to take the masses with them. They prefer to compromise, as now J.P. Narayan and all the groups are trying to do. Therefore we are now entering a new phase where sharp class lines are slowly and steadily being drawn.

*Q. When the state of emergency was imposed, the CPI hailed it. Have they altered their position at all in light of the regime's anti-working-class policies?*

A. No. But there is a confusion created among them. They are unable to explain the regime's policies. Indira has adopted a strategy of building up a new leader in her son Sanjay, along with a whole apparatus which is basically nonideological, ruthlessly pragmatic, eliminating even the "socialist" pretense itself. This is causing the Communist party a considerable amount of confusion.

Secondly, they are being pressed from below, from their rank and file, their trade-union activists, and their peasant workers. The CPI initially started some movements in support of Indira's twenty-point economic program, such as for the cancellation of peasant debts. But as soon as any movement is started, the regime represses it. So they had to abandon that. This is leading to a tremendous discontent among the day-to-day activists who are working with the masses themselves, and probably also among the leadership, where there may be some differences of opinion as to how much the CPI should support the government.

*Q. Are there any signs of members of the CPI breaking from it over their support to the regime?*

8. Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (Dravidian Advancement Association), a party based primarily on Tamils, which emerged from the Dravidian nationalist movements of southern India. It came to power in Tamil Nadu in 1967 and was ousted by Gandhi on January 31.—IP

A. I have no idea. But from the limited information which I have got from a number of friends—trade unionists and peasant workers—we hear that a section of these discontented elements, who had dedicated their lives to trade-union and other struggles, are now disheartened and want to change, to find some correct alternative. But how much and to what extent, I have no clear idea.

*Q. What about the CPM? How has it responded to the state of emergency? How do its members view the party's response?*

A. Technically, it is opposed to the emergency. It opposes the measures adopted by the regime. But its main stance is that a preemergency situation should be brought back, that parliamentary democracy should be restored. Since they are oriented to parliamentary politics and they hold the theory that a peaceful transition to socialism can be achieved, an important section of the leadership is preoccupied with preparations for the possible elections.

They carry on a few limited economic struggles within this framework. But in their rank and file there is a great discontent. One section of the CPM now realizes that they will not be able to utilize the elections as they had thought they could do earlier. They feel they must rethink their position. It may still be the same basic position, but they may favor different types of struggles.

The leadership of the CPM has not learned from the emergency. They still hold to the two-stage theory of revolution and believe in a peaceful transfer of power. But in the rank and file, among the party cadres, there is a deep discontent. Hundreds of young, dedicated comrades, who are involved daily with the working class and the peasantry, but who are still under some illusions, are now rethinking all their old positions.

I have heard that there are sharp rifts and splits within the CPM. Many of these trade unionists are discontented with the betrayals. But they do not know what to do next. They want to develop certain types of struggles. They want ideological clarity. So they have started discussing with others the mistakes of the CPM's whole approach. This situation developing within the CPM calls for greater vigor, greater clarity, and a quicker response from the Trotskyists.

*Q. And the Naxalites, who also have a two-stage theory of revolution, have they done any rethinking since the emergency?*

A. There is a big rethinking going on among them, but still they have not broken from their past line. They are now regrouping themselves. They are the most concentrated target of the government, even today. It was the only left party which was declared illegal and lots of

arrests are being made. They are being pursued viciously. Symbolically, Naxalism represents peasant unrest, so any peasant unrest is today dubbed as Naxalism and is



GANDHI

being curbed. So in the context of this repression and of their own past experiences, they are regrouping and thinking very deeply about their positions.

They are now beginning to realize the role of the proletariat, the role of the city and the working class. They are becoming aware that unlike China, India is more centrally organized; the military and police are more unified. But they have not completely broken from their guerrilla warfare strategy.

Another interesting thing is developing with them. Now, with Moscow and the Congress regime coming closer—and, like all Stalinists, their search for a "progressive bourgeoisie" is there—they hold that the bourgeoisie which is favorably disposed toward American capitalism is actually the "patriotic bourgeoisie," in contrast with the bourgeoisie that favors Soviet "social-imperialism."

*Q. What sort of struggles do you see emerging in the near future against the regime?*

A. The struggles may take several forms. One kind would be against the crude measures adopted by the government, either at a state level or a central level, like the forced sterilization, the removal of slum dwellers on a big scale, the hounding out of beggars. There may be resistance, which will be scattered, local, and uncoordinated. Such struggles are already going on, but I'm afraid we do not get much news about them.

The second category of struggles will focus on economic issues: against retrench-

ment, layoffs, the barbarous treatment meted out in the factories. The whole habit of resisting may reemerge, though it will be a little more difficult in the context of the large reserve army of unemployed. And for want of leadership, they will probably not find an adequate expression. But the ferment will go on.

This type of struggle may develop in rural areas also, against the growing pauperization of the peasantry, against the lack of purchasing power, against the taking away or hoarding of grain, etc. This may lead to more desperate forms of struggle in different parts, to killings, attacks on the ruling class, the looting of grain, and to class struggles—not necessarily politically oriented—but on economic issues.

Another kind would be the semiconsumer type of struggles, against price rises. There was a brief period for about six or eight months when prices were partly controlled but again there is a new upsurge of prices.

At present, under the emergency, the whole student movement has been cowed. But the new policy which is being adopted to reshape the entire educational structure, to cut back, may again—after some time of confusion and bewilderment—lead to the eruption of various types of movements.

Some of the old parties, which do not believe in class struggle, may launch some terroristic opposition, sabotage, eliminating hated individuals, etc. Like the old terrorist movements, they will distribute literature, exploit the discontent, but it will essentially be a middle-class movement restricted to the urban areas.

The last and most difficult kind of struggles would be the slow building up of movements based on class lines. Although they have considerable bases, the two powerful parties, the CPI and CPM, are not themselves ready for struggle. The other left parties are not yet well-entrenched and organized. So there will be a period when that whole apparatus must slowly emerge.

Until then, struggles will break out here and there, but they will be uncoordinated, spontaneous, partly organized by some groups, but on essentially economic issues or for civil liberties. It will be a sort of arena where all the political currents and subcurrents will start developing. And I think the coming couple of years will be a period when all of India will be a cauldron where various types of unrest will arise. For want of an all-India revolutionary socialist party, seasoned, trained, rooted in the masses, theoretically clear, this is the situation we will be faced with.

I don't visualize a pessimistic picture of a docile India completely curbed or demoralized. The limited experience we have here of various types of struggles, which are not recorded but which are happening, give me an inkling that there is a confusion, but resistance.

And its implications I need not tell you.

# AROUND THE WORLD



## Portuguese Bakery Workers Strike

Portuguese bakery workers, many of whom earn only about \$140 a month—barely more than the minimum wage—went on strike October 15. The walkout was reported to be 85 percent effective, with the workers vowing to stay out “until the Ministry of Labor and the bosses give in.”

The government of Prime Minister Mário Soares has opposed the strike as a threat to its austerity program. In one incident in Monte de Caparica, a bakery owner shot and wounded three workers protesting the hiring of scabs.

## Straight From the Horse's Mouth

“WASHINGTON—In just 12 more days, it will all be over—thank the Lord.

“It's not the suspense over the outcome that's so hard to take; it's the emptiness and dreariness of the campaign. There's been a ‘nobody for President’ movement each four years for quite some time, but never has it been so widespread and heartfelt.

“Everywhere one goes, the reaction is much the same. Rather than merely expressing disinterest or apathy, people are speaking with active distaste of the choice before them, distaste that often approaches despair. Even among party leaders and campaign workers there's a ‘let's get this nightmare over with’ senti-

ment. In 25 years of covering presidential campaigns, this reporter has never encountered such a sour national mood.

“Polls and other estimates suggest that slightly over half the potential voters will stay home. The more one travels, the more one feels that these predictions, if anything, understate the likely non-vote.”

(Columnist Alan L. Otten in the October 21 *Wall Street Journal*.)

## Israeli Official Worried About Exodus of Whites From Rhodesia

Michael Shashar, the former consul-general of Israel in New York and currently an official in the Israeli president's office, sounded a warning in the September 22 issue of the Israeli daily, *Yediot Aharonot*. According to Shashar, there is a danger for Israel “in the proposal to resolve the Rhodesian problem by paying compensation to the white inhabitants of that country so that they should leave their own land. This proposal . . . tacitly approves the claim of the Blacks that the whites are a ‘foreign body’ in this continent, a newly arrived minority, whose place is not in Africa.”

Shashar noted that the Zionist settlement of Palestine has long been compared to the European colonization of Africa. But he argues, “We, in contrast to the relatively short history of the white settlers in the Black continent (a fact which should not disqualify them from living there!) can point to a long and continuous connection with the land of Israel of hundreds and thousands of years. It is relatively easy to persuade nations which grew up on the Bible of this. . . .”

## 'Vast' Terrorist Campaign by Anti-Castro Cubans

Venezuelan and American officials reported October 19 that several of the Cuban counterrevolutionaries arrested in connection with the October 6 bombing of a Cuban airplane were involved in a “vast” terrorist campaign. Seventy-three persons were killed in the crash of the plane.

The admission came after Cuban Prime Minister Fidel Castro accused the Central Intelligence Agency of involvement in terrorist actions against Cuba and announced the cancellation of the antihijacking treaty he had signed with Washington in 1973.

A map of Washington, D.C., related to the recent murder of former Chilean Ambassador Orlando Letelier, and plans for the October 6 bombing and other terrorist operations were found in the Caracas home of Luis Posada Carriles, a Cuban exile who was formerly operations chief of the Venezuelan secret police. Before that he had been trained by the CIA and the U.S. Army.

One of Posada's employees, Hernán Ricardo Losano, who was arrested in Trinidad following the airline bombing, admitted placing two bombs aboard the plane. Losano was also a Cuban counter-revolutionary who received CIA training.

Also arrested were Orlando García and Francisco Núñez, Cuban exiles who had worked in the Venezuelan police apparatus, and Orlando Bosch, who had been paroled after conviction for anti-Castro terrorist activities in the United States.

García, who was a special adviser on security affairs to Venezuelan President Carlos Andrés Pérez, arranged a meeting between Bosch and the Venezuelan president. Pérez used the Cuban counterrevolutionaries not only as part of his secret police apparatus, but also as diplomatic go-betweens in relations with the Chilean junta.

According to the Caracas daily *El Nacional*, terrorist actions were planned by the CIA-trained counterrevolutionaries in the United States, Venezuela, Trinidad, Barbados, Guyana, Panama, and Colombia.

## New Arrests in Soweto

South African police, arriving in twenty vehicles, surrounded Morris Isaacson High School in Soweto on the morning of October 22. They arrested all the teachers and students in the school, and took them to police headquarters in four vans.

Morris Isaacson was a center of student activism during the initial student protests against the apartheid regime in mid-June.

## Demonstrations, 'Alarmist News' Banned in Colombia

Martial law and a curfew were decreed in Colombia October 7. President Alfonso López Michelsen claimed the steps were needed because of “a grave domestic disturbance of public order.”

The decree was directed principally



“With 80% of the precincts reporting, it looks like a runoff between no preference and none of the above.”



against public health workers, who have been on strike since September 6, protesting government attempts to cut back on their fringe benefits.

Other provisions of the decree include:

- Temporary takeovers of radio stations that broadcast "false, tendentious, or alarmist news."

- A ban on demonstrations.

- Cancellation of licenses of striking professionals in public health who do not return to work immediately.

- Military trials for "subversives" charged with having committed actions threatening the public order.

### Yugoslav Judge Gets 6-Year Sentence

A Yugoslav district judge, arrested in his courtroom last May as a result of his advocacy of civil rights, was convicted of treason October 15 and sentenced to six years in prison.

The judge, fifty-five-year-old Franc Miklavcic, was accused of advocating the separation of his native republic of Slovenia from the rest of Yugoslavia. The charge—which he denied—was based on selections from a personal diary seized by the police.

The Yugoslav regime has been attempting to tighten up the court system. Earlier this year Srdja Popovic, a lawyer who has defended many dissidents, was tried and convicted because of the views expressed in a summation in one of his cases.

### Peruvian Fishermen Strike

Thousands of Peruvian fishermen have gone on strike to protest a plan to sell boats from the state-owned fishing monopoly to private owners. The Federation of Peruvian Fishermen charges that the move would result in the loss of hundreds of jobs in the anchovy fleet, which includes about 310 boats. At least fifteen persons are needed to operate each boat.

On October 21 the military government authorized the state monopoly to dismiss striking crews. Anchovy is normally Peru's second largest export, but the fishing season lasts only two or three months.

### Kenyans Get Warning From Regime

The attorney general of Kenya warned October 6 that it is a criminal offense punishable by death for anyone "to imagine, devise or intend the death or deposition of the president." The warning was apparently prompted by a number of public meetings calling for the amendment of the constitutional provisions covering presidential succession. President Jomo Kenyatta, who has ruled Kenya since it won independence in 1963, is eighty-four years old.

According to the current constitution, Kenyatta's successor must be nominated by a "recognized" political party and be a member of parliament. Kenyatta's African

National Union is the only such "recognized" party.

However, the attorney general declared, "Anyone who raises such matters at public meetings or who publishes such matters does so at his peril."



KENYATTA: Doesn't like what he hears.

### U.S. 'Regrets' Hiroshima Show

After a storm of protests from Japan over the reenactment of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima in a Harlingen, Texas, air show, an American diplomat has expressed "regret" to the Japanese government over the incident.

The reenactment, complete with a mushroom cloud provided by U.S. Army engineers from Fort Hood, was staged by a group called the Confederate Air Force. It was part of an air show to raise money for a World War II aircraft collection.

### Secret U.S.-Spain Treaty Revealed

The Spanish regime has secretly agreed to permit American planes airlifting military hardware to other countries—including Israel—to use Spanish bases. The agreement was reached in January when Henry Kissinger visited Spain to finalize the adoption of a new military pact, according to an October 10 dispatch from Madrid filed by *Washington Post* correspondent Miguel Acoca.

Although U.S. and Spanish officials

both denied the existence of such an agreement, Acoca reported that the deal is already in operation. "The first beneficiary of the arrangement is Iran," according to Acoca. "Planes flying shipments of American weapons to Iran stop regularly in Spain. The crash of a cargo plane near Madrid in May revealed part of the Iran operation."

During the 1973 Middle East war the Nixon administration resupplied the Israeli army through an airlift operation that used the Azores as a refueling stop. With the overthrow of the dictatorship in Portugal, however, Washington had to find a new refueling base. Moreover, Acoca reports that not only Israel, Iran, and other Middle Eastern countries are involved in the agreement, but also some African countries. He did not specify which ones.

### Twenty-two U.S. Congressmen Line Up at Park Regime's Trough

A federal grand jury is investigating charges that at least twenty-two current and former members of Congress have received bribes from South Korean agents operating in the United States. The legislators—both Democrats and Republicans—received large amounts of cash or expensive presents of furniture, jewelry, vacations, airline tickets, and lavish entertainment. The "gifts" were intended to "create a favorable legislative climate" for the dictatorial regime of President Park Chung Hee.

The main conduit was Tongsun Park, according to the charges. Park, a wealthy businessman who lives in Washington was reportedly granted a privileged position as a middleman in the South Korean import-export trade, with the understanding that he would spread some of the profits around Capitol Hill. In one month alone he reportedly wrote checks for more than \$900,000 payable to "cash."

Park apparently used some of the money for his own purposes, buying a \$300,000 mansion, a small estate for \$480,000, and spending \$400,000 on his own office building.

### 60,000 Prisoners in South Korea

According to the South Korean Ministry of Justice, more than 60,600 persons were being held in twenty-nine prisons at the end of June. Ten thousand new prisoners swelled the ranks of those jailed by the Park dictatorship in 1975, and in the first six months of 1976 the prison population increased by 10 percent.

In Seoul's West Gate Prison, ten inmates are jammed together in each five-square-meter cell. Prisoners there must sleep in alternate shifts, and epidemic skin disease is spreading. The Ministry of Justice is rushing to complete a new prison with a capacity of 3,000 at Seong Dong Gu in Seoul.

# Selections From the Left

## Imprecor

international press correspondence

A fortnightly news bulletin published by the United Secretariat of the Fourth International.

Under the headline "Ouster of the 'Radicals,'" the October 21 issue features an assessment of the current shake-up in China.

"If current reports are confirmed," the article states, "it appears that the so-called radical faction of the leadership of the Chinese Communist party has been ousted from power immediately after being deprived of its unassailable protection by the death of Mao. There can scarcely be any illusions about the character of this 'radical' faction. It does not at all represent an expression, even an indirect one, of the 'left Red Guards,' the advanced wing of the mass mobilizations that occurred during the cultural revolution. On the contrary, it is a faction of the bureaucracy that won its stripes by repressing both rebellious workers (in particular in Shanghai) and the independent Red Guards. It was this repression that enabled Mao to make his right turn at the end of the cultural revolution, a turn that affected both foreign and domestic policy.

"The elimination of Chiang Ching and her comrades thus appears as a conflict within the bureaucracy. At this point it is impossible to determine whether one of the two factions desires—or could be led—to 'normalize' relations with the Kremlin, a temptation that has solid objective bases on which to arise sooner or later. It is probable that the 'radicals' will enjoy some support from the broad masses during the immediate period ahead. But this does not mean that the victory of the 'moderate' wing of the apparatus will leave the masses indifferent or will fail to have deep repercussions on the evolution of the situation in the People's Republic of China.

"First of all, the most politicized layers of the proletariat and youth are exhibiting deep and mounting hostility to the apparatus as a whole. Resentment against social inequality and bureaucratic privilege is widespread. The temporary 'victors' in the succession struggle identify with the line of consolidation of the apparatus and its privileges. The resistance of the masses to this line will not be long in coming.

"Second, the profound disarray the elimination of the 'radicals' will provoke among the 'Maoists' (and not only in China itself) will further loosen the leadership's control over the political and ideological thinking of the middle-layer cadres and rank and file. This thinking will become increasingly critical, even in regard to Maoism as such.

"At bottom, what is becoming increasingly clear in the present political dynamic is that in China, unlike the USSR in the 1930s and 1950s, the independent mobilizations of the masses who are not depoliticized or demoralized will intensify and this will shake up the inner-bureaucratic maneuvering. In this sense, Mao has already died a second time, and 'orthodox' Maoism has perished with him. The rebirth of revolutionary Marxism in a China on the road to political revolution is now on the agenda."

## RÉVOLUTION!

Revolutionary Communist weekly. Published in Paris.

In the October 1 issue, Victor Mattiot offers the following as Mao Tsetung's main contribution to Marxist thought:

"A phrase in the communiqué issued by the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist party after the death of Chairman Mao summarized very well what gave and continues to give the proletarian course in China its power. For the first time in the history of Marxism, Chairman Mao explicitly advanced the idea that classes remain and that the class struggle continues after the socialist transformation of the means of production; and he formulated the scientific thesis that the bourgeoisie exists within the Communist party."

## Socialist Action

Published twice monthly in Wellington, New Zealand.

Kay McVey, writing in the October 8 issue, takes up the treatment of workers from the Pacific Islands who have stayed in New Zealand longer than their papers permit. Thousands registered under a government "amnesty plan," only to face deportation.

"Recent government announcements indicate that at least half of the 4,647 Pacific Island 'overstayers' who registered for permanent residence in New Zealand will receive letters in the next few weeks advising that their applications have been rejected. The future of the remaining Pacific Islanders who have been granted provisional permanent residence also hangs in the balance, dependant on satisfactory results from X-ray and medical tests."

The Pacific Islanders are used as a reserve labor force by New Zealand industry, brought in during boom periods and deported during recessions. More than

1,000 Tongans are among those being deported in the current sweep—more than 1 percent of that island's population.

"Loss of remittances [from these workers] severely affects the living standards of Tongan families in a country where the GNP for its 90,000 residents is only \$240 per capita. Having a relative overseas can mean the possibility of moving out of a thatched hut with a dirt floor, having tinned meat one day a week, or sending a child to school for another term."

Samoans are also victimized by the New Zealand immigration authorities. McVey quotes an editorial from the *Samoa Times* that pointed out:

"The immigration problem has strong overtones of racism in the part of the present New Zealand cabinet.

"Perhaps the New Zealand authorities do not consider that brown-skinned Islanders have any dignity at all. The methods used are reminiscent of those used by New Zealand's imperialistic army of occupation here during the time of the Mau.

"Samoans who know their history cannot help being disgusted by the calculated cruelty New Zealanders are using against their fellow citizens overseas."

## Internationalen

"The International," central organ of the Communist Workers League (Swedish section of the Fourth International). Published weekly in Stockholm.

A strong movement against pollution is developing in Sweden. A national organization of activists, the Miljöförbund (Ecology League) had its first full-fledged congress October 2-3.

Writing in the October 8 issue, Jacob Haraldsson notes that the organization already has about 3,000 members and more than thirty local branches, even though it has not yet even begun regular activity.

In its congress, the Miljöförbund decided to establish a magazine open to all groups in the ecology movement. One objective in this was to bring all the various currents together in common work.

Haraldsson reports that the congress "adopted statutes and elected a nine-member National Committee and an eleven-member publications committee representing the entire political spectrum in the organization."

It also passed a resolution demanding that the new premier, Thorbjörn Fälldin, keep his election promise and begin doing away with the projects to build nuclear power plants. The day after the congress sessions ended, the new National Committee began discussing a campaign to win a

national referendum against atomic power.

Haraldsson explains that the congress was also a victory over the right wing in the ecology movement represented by Björn Gillberg, leader of a group called Miljö och Framtid (Environment and Future), which had long stood in the way of developing united actions.

Gillberg apparently responded to the Miljöförbund congress by trying to step up a redbaiting campaign. In an interview in the October 1 issue of the mass circulation paper *Svenska Dagbladet*, he accused the Swedish Trotskyists of plotting to take over the ecology movement. As evidence of this, he cited an article on revolutionary strategy in the fight against pollution published in the January 1976 issue of the Communist Workers League magazine *Fjärde Internationalen*.

## Guardian

An independent radical newsweekly published in New York.

Under the headline, "Don't vote, it only legitimizes them," an editorial in the October 20 issue discusses the 1976 U.S. presidential election. It argues that "the mass disaffection from this year's campaign reveals a measure of sophistication among the masses that is more than a little encouraging."

Taking a different attitude than during the 1972 election, when they saw George McGovern as a lesser evil to Richard Nixon, the editors firmly reject the idea of voting for any of the main capitalist candidates.

"As to the CP [Communist party] and the SWP [Socialist Workers party]," they say, "both of these parties are so riddled with reformism that a vote for either—far from being a 'protest'—is in essence an accommodation to the capitalist system. Both are based on the proposition that capitalism can be made to 'work.' A vote for either is a vote against class struggle and can only serve to hold back the urgent task of bringing into being a genuine revolutionary party of the working class."

## THE SPARK

Published fortnightly by the Spark group in Detroit, Michigan.

The October 11-25 issue takes up the American presidential election. Pointing out that more than half the electorate is expected to abstain from the election, the editors comment that "workers are demoralized and discouraged. Seeing no political alternative, most workers are turned off by politics altogether."

The editors argue, "It is important to fight against this demoralization. It is important to show that there are political choices. An election campaign can help do this. An election campaign, if it is directed

toward the working class, can help to educate workers. It can show that there are different choices from those presented by the bosses. Workers can have a choice that opposes capitalism, a revolutionary choice.

"At this point there is no group which is making this kind of election campaign. To one extent or another, all of the left groups create illusions that you can change society through elections."

However, they continue, "Workers can make a demonstration against capitalism, by voting for the candidates which come closest to clearly opposing capitalism.

"We believe it is possible for workers to do this by voting for the Socialist Workers Party, which is running candidates nationwide for many offices, including the presidency. The SWP is a Trotskyist group which says that a revolution is necessary. It says that this revolution can only be made by the working class. And it says that the revolution must be international. Workers who want to oppose capitalism can vote for these ideas."

## RECONSTRUCT THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL! TORCH

Newspaper of the Revolutionary Socialist League, published monthly in New York.

An editorial in the October 15-November 14 issue notes that "this is a presidential election year," and argues that bourgeois democracy is a fraud. "If the workers stuck together and refused to vote for either Carter or Ford, they would have more influence on the elections than if every last worker voted for Carter," the editorial says.

"Today, the working class as a whole is not united or conscious enough to organize a mass boycott of the elections," it continues. "But there is a tremendous suspiciousness about the elections and the whole political process on the part of the workers and other oppressed people. It is likely that a majority of the working class will not even vote in the November elections. This largely reflects political apathy and not class consciousness. But even this worries the ruling class. . . ."

"Revolutionaries, radicals and class conscious militants should boycott the elections and persuade other workers and oppressed people to do the same. The task is to turn the workers' apathy and distrust into an active and conscious hatred for capitalism and all it stands for."

No mention is made in the editorial of the presidential campaigns being run by either the Communist party or the Socialist Workers party.

## DAILY WORLD

Newspaper of the American Communist party. Published in New York.

Under the headline "Philippine CP offers guide on referendum," an article in

the October 15 issue urges a vote in favor of continuing martial law in the Philippines.

William Pomeroy explains: "The issues involved in the Oct. 16 referendum are best indicated by the position taken by the Partido Komunista ng Pilipinas" on the following questions being put to a vote:

"1) Do you want martial law to be lifted?"

"The PKP is urging the people to write 'No' on the ballot form, but to add the following words: 'But this time use martial law to make changes for the working masses, and not for foreign capital.'

"This is a demand that the Marcos government reverse its policy of relying heavily on foreign capital and investment for carrying out its development program. It is not an isolated demand. The Marcos government has been moving with increasing firmness toward alignment with the third world countries that are calling for a new international economic order in which economic independence and equality of economic relations with advanced capitalist powers will prevail."

The second question in the referendum is "Are you against the convening of the interim National Assembly?"

"The PKP answer on this is 'Yes.' The Assembly which, according to the new Constitution adopted soon after martial law rule began, is to be introduced when considered appropriate, will be composed of members of the defunct Congress and of the pre-martial law Constitutional Convention. These were made up of members of the landlord class, the big capitalists and the partners and spokesmen of U.S. and other foreign capital.

"The PKP considers such an Assembly to be undemocratic and a sham form of representative democracy. It calls for an Assembly based on sectoral representation, 'i.e., a person should be a member of the Assembly as a representative of a distinctive economic calling or occupation, such as the workers, the peasants, the capitalists, the intellectuals, etc. In this way the working class and peasantry can have their own representative leaders who can advance the interests of the masses in the Assembly.'"

Pomeroy notes that previous referendums had shown "wide support for Marcos and his policies." And, what is more: "There has been less rigging of the results than Marcos' opponents claim." The Stalinist journalist explains that Marcos had carried out a number of "serious reforms deserving of popular support," including "a more independent foreign policy that has as its main feature diplomatic and trade relations with all socialist countries."

He points out that the PKP avoided making any hasty judgments about the imposition of martial law on September 20, 1972, and that this prudence has paid off:

"In September, 1974, the PKP finally reached a national unity agreement with

the Marcos government, selectively supporting a number of reforms introduced by Marcos, who extended the semblance of legality to the PKP."

To justify its deal with the Marcos dictatorship, the PKP argues that it is not the "form" but the "content" of the government that matters: "... a government may be authoritarian, it may be a martial law government, but if its powers are extensively used to benefit and involve the people, then it is essentially democratic."

sous le drapeau du

## SOCIALISME

*(Under the Banner of Socialism), organ of the International Revolutionary Marxist Tendency. Published monthly in Paris.*

Over the years the editors have conducted a campaign for the release of Ahmed Ben Bella, the former president of Algeria, who was arrested during the June 19, 1965, military coup.

The June issue, taking note of the plebiscite held June 27 on the new Algerian constitution, contains the following appeal:

"At a time when the government that emerged from June 19 is seeking to legitimize itself through popular consensus, we call attention to the inhuman and arbitrary detention Ahmed Ben Bella has undergone for eleven years, and we join together in demanding his freedom."

Signers of the appeal are: Mohamed Abbsi; Robert Antelme; Sadak Alazen; Gilbert Baechtold; Georges Braun; Maurice Buttin; René Chaine; François Chatelet; Jean Marie Domenach; Pasteur André Dumas; Marguerite Duras; Jean-Jacques de Felice; Pierre Emmanuel, of the Académie Française; Christiane Gillmann; Jean Guéhenno, of the Académie Française; Mohamed Harbi; Georges Houdin; Dr. Hafid Ibrahim; Maurice Jardot; Alfred Kastler, Nobel Prize winner; Lakhdar Lafif; Lafue-Veron, attorney; Michel Laval; R.P. Le Goy; Michel Leiris; Sarah Maldoror; Hugues Marganne; Abdoul Allah Al Quossini; Evelyne Mortier; Franck Natali; Said Nasser; Michel Raptis; Jean Rous; David Rousset; Claude Roy; Mal. Adoul Allah Sallal; Martine Scemana; Luarent Schwartz; Jean-René Sulzer; Pierre Vidal-Naquet; and Abu Ali Yacin.

In addition, the appeal is signed by seven members of the British parliament: Andrew Nennett, Tom Litterick, Joan Maynard, Dennis Skinner, Ron Thomas, Jo Richardson, and Audrey Wise.

## was tun

*"What Is To Be Done," weekly paper of the International Marxist Group. Published in Frankfurt, West Germany.*

The September 30 issue points up a recent case of anti-Communist witch-

hunting that indicates the scope of political blacklisting.

In the state of Lower Saxony, a twenty-seven-year-old teacher, Gerd Ahrends, was denied employment in the public schools because of his membership in the West German Communist party. When he was offered a position in a church school for handicapped children, the state government ruled that he could not take it because of a law that states that if "grounds exist for removing teachers in the public schools from service," then they must also be excluded from teaching in private schools.

*Was Tun* points out that the Ahrends case exposes the falsity of the argument that the "radicals decree," on which the job ban ("Berufsverbot") is based, does not really represent blacklisting because it would only deny public jobs to persons whose views would prevent them from serving the state loyally.

*Was Tun* writes: "In the first place, public service is not just any profession. Already in 1970, 16 percent of wage earners were in public service." The state has a virtual monopoly on jobs in some professions, and not just education by any means, since, among other things, the railroads are nationalized.

Furthermore, "blacklisting is not confined to public service. Political firings are also the order of the day in the private sector, although there they are more often covered up. Once you are blacklisted in the public service, this blacklisting usually follows you into the private sector. There have been sufficient cases showing this, as the recent Ahrends case in Lower Saxony."

Another article in the same issue reports the extension of the "Berufsverbot" even to elected positions in the government. On September 16, a Maoist member of the Heidelberg city council was ousted by a vote of the majority parties in this body.

*Was Tun* stresses the importance of building a broad campaign to defend the democratic rights of the 2,000 persons who voted for this Maoist student leader, Helga Rosenbaum, despite the difficulties raised by the sectarian line of her organization, the Kommunistischer Bund Westdeutschlands (KBW—Communist League of West Germany), which sees the struggle against the witch-hunt only as a means of building its own organization.



*"October," weekly paper of the Marxist-Leninist Movement. Published in Helsinki.*

Like its "sister parties" in Sweden and Norway, the Maoist group that publishes this paper plays up the "Soviet imperialist" threat to its own country and concentrates its fire on the local Communist party as the "agents of Soviet social imperialism." In the course of carrying out an unprincipled faction campaign on

behalf of Peking, it points up many aspects of the corruption of the pro-Moscow parties. But in this context, even justified criticisms are usually grossly distorted.

Trying to apply Peking's dogmatic and abstract theories to "explain" Soviet revisionism, the Scandinavian Maoists have tended to develop a generally sectarian approach to all mass reformist workers parties. *Lokakuu's* response to the fall of the Finnish popular-front government on September 17 is an example.

The headline in the September 29 issue is, "The Government of Big Capital Falls, the CP is Already Ready for Another One."

The government was toppled by increasing tensions between the workers parties and their bourgeois coalition partners. Under pressure from their ranks, who have been hard-hit by the economic crisis, the workers parties were forced to push measures to soften the blows to the workers' standard of living. The bourgeois parties did not want to pay the cost. The result of the fall of the coalition was the installation of a bourgeois government encharged with keeping a tight grip on the purse strings of the bourgeois state.

*Lokakuu* does say that the fall of the coalition "confirmed the correctness of the Marxist-Leninist principle that in normal times Communists cannot enter a bourgeois government, since it is impossible in such a way to defend the interests of the workers." The qualification "normal times" was necessary to defend the Chinese CP's history of class collaborationist alliances.

The Maoist weekly notes that the CP did not draw any fundamental lessons from the fall of the popular front, but concentrates its fire against the pro-Moscow Stalinists' failure to denounce the other main workers party as "bourgeois."

"Aarne Saarinen [the CP leader] was quick to announce that in his view the best governmental alternative is a coalition of the SDP [Sociali Demokraattinen Puolue—Social Democratic party], Kepu [Keskus Puolue—Center party], and the SKP [Suomen Kommunistinen Puolue—Communist party of Finland]. The LKP [Liberaalinen Kansanpuolue—Liberal People's party] and the RKP [Ruotsalainen Kansanpuolue—Swedish People's party] are to be left out since, according to Saarinen, 'they were conduits bringing reactionary influences into the Miettunen government.' . . .

"Saarinen closes his eyes to all the facts; both the SDP and Kepu are bourgeois parties that advance the interests of the monopolies. . . .

"The rapidly rising political level of the Finnish workers' struggle has meant that the concept pushed by the revisionist and reformist workers leaders that the SDP is a 'workers party' is being more and more widely recognized as deception."

# La Caída de Chiang Ch'ing

Por Les Evans

[La siguiente es una traducción del artículo "The Fall of Chiang Ch'ing," que apareció en el número del 25 de octubre de nuestra revista. La traducción es de *Intercontinental Press*.]

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A menos de un mes de la muerte de Mao Tsetung, el régimen que él dirigía se encuentra en una crisis sobre quién debe ser su sucesor. El poco conocido Hua Kuo-feng ha sido lanzado a la presidencia del Partido Comunista de China y se ha desatado una purga general contra muchos de los más cercanos colaboradores de Mao, incluyendo a su viuda, Chiang Ch'ing.

Durante una semana, corrieron rumores por Pekín de que cuatro importantes miembros del Politburó del PCCh habían sido arrestados el 7 de octubre, en una reunión convocada para designar al nuevo presidente del partido.

Entre los dirigentes que según los informes habían sido encarcelados se encontraba Chiang Ch'ing, que dirige la política cultural del estado; Wang Hung-wen, vicepresidente del partido y, después de la muerte de Chou En-lai en enero, el segundo funcionario en importancia dentro del PCCh; Chang Ch'un-ch'iao, vicepresidente primero y principal comisario político del ejército; y Yao Wen-yuan, que es considerado director de los medios de información. Según algunas informaciones, hay otras cincuenta personas arrestadas, incluso el ministro de cultura y altos administradores de la Universidad de Pekín.

El régimen ha guardado un cauto silencio sobre la purga, contestando las indagaciones de los diplomáticos occidentales con un simple "sin comentario," incluso cuando se les pide que confirmen o desmientan los rumores de que los cuatro miembros del Politburó fueron fusilados. Pero el 15 de octubre comenzó en las principales ciudades una campaña de carteles denunciando a los cuatro, mencionando sus nombres y acusándolos de planear un "golpe" contra Hua Kuo-feng.

Los carteles son muy osados, incluso según los niveles de un régimen que lleva diez años viendo cómo uno tras otro de sus más altos dirigentes son destituidos y caen en desgracia. En medio del duelo oficial por la muerte de Mao, aparecieron en Shanghai carteles en los que se atacaba a su afligida viuda y se pedía: "Aplasten las cabezas de los cuatro perros" y "Aplasten y estrangulen a la banda de cuatro."

El 15 de octubre, según un informe procedente de Pekín publicado en el *Toronto Globe and Mail*: "Miles de ciudadanos chinos celebraron hoy en Shanghai, que se suponía era el bastión de los radicales, la caída de la viuda de Mao Tsetung y otros tres dirigentes radicales. La multitud marchó por las calles, pegando carteles en las paredes de casi todos los edificios del centro de la ciudad y organizando manifestaciones frente a las oficinas municipales."

Las manifestaciones contra Chiang Ch'ing continuaron al día siguiente en una escala aún más masiva. El *New York Times* informaba el 17 de octubre:

"Una multitud, que se dijo había llegado a los cientos de miles de personas, llevaba efigies de la Sra. Chiang colgando de una horca y pancartas pidiendo que fuera 'derrocada.' La fuente afirmó que la manifestación se prolongó durante todo el día en torno a las oficinas partidarias en Shanghai, celebrándose también actos en las fábricas y en las plazas públicas para explicar los últimos desarrollos."

Chang Ch'un-ch'iao y Wang Hung-wen, además de sus puestos nacionales, encabezan el gobierno municipal de Shanghai.

Una campaña de rumores contra Chiang Ch'ing y los otros los acusa ahora de tratar de asesinar a Hua Kuo-feng. Esta es una escalada de los primeros cargos, que fueron lanzados una semana antes, y que únicamente los acusaban de falsificar directrices del Presidente Mao para proponer que se eligiera a Chiang Ch'ing como presidente del partido, en lugar de Hua.

De manera típicamente estalinista, no se ha permitido a ninguno de los acusados hacer una declaración pública para defenderse, aunque su posición en la jerarquía del partido es superior a la de sus acusadores.

Hua Kuo-feng, que fue nombrado primer ministro después de la muerte de Chou En-lai en enero, ha tomado los puestos que quedaron vacantes a la muerte de Mao Tsetung. El 12 de octubre, funcionarios chinos confirmaron informaciones que habían aparecido en carteles pegados en las paredes de Pekín en el sentido de que Hua había sido nombrado presidente del Partido Comunista de China.

¿Qué les ha sucedido a la viuda y a los otros tres colaboradores íntimos de Mao? ¿Qué diferencias políticas están involucradas en la lucha fraccional secreta en la dirección del partido?

El que esas preguntas sigan sin contestación demuestra claramente el carácter

elitista y camarillesco de la dirección estalinista de Pekín. Su estructura monolítica, creada para proteger del cuestionamiento de las masas trabajadoras a la burocracia privilegiada que detenta el poder, no permite la discusión abierta, ni entre sus miembros ni en la base del partido.

La prensa burguesa presenta la lucha como un combate entre los "moderados" (ejemplificados por Chou En-lai, Hua Kuo-feng, el ministro de planificación económica Li Hsien-nien, etc.) y los "radicales," dirigidos por Chiang Ch'ing. Se dice que los "moderados" están a favor de dar privilegios especiales a la burocracia, de modernizar la industria, de "la ley y el orden," y de la distensión con occidente. A los "radicales" se les da el mérito de estar defendiendo el "comunismo puro," la nivelación igualitaria de salarios, la participación política de las masas y el fervor revolucionario.

No cabe lugar a dudas de que existen diferencias políticas de táctica entre las formaciones camarillescas del alto mando. Aún no se sabe cuál es el fondo de esas diferencias. Pero el esquema que presentan los medios de información burgueses no tiene nada que ver con la realidad. Los atributos de los "moderados" no se establecen a partir de sus propias palabras o acciones, sino a partir de las acusaciones que lanzó Mao contra los opositores que purgó después de la Revolución Cultural de mediados de los años sesenta, desde Liu Shao-ch'i hasta Teng Hsiao-ping. La descripción de los "radicales" es tomada acriticamente de los efusivos autoelogios del régimen.

Si fuera correcto el análisis de la prensa capitalista, la victoria de Hua marcaría entonces un decisivo giro a la derecha.

Parece que las verdaderas pugnas obedecen a otras razones. En los últimos años, Mao prescindió incluso de la formalidad de trabajar a través de los canales oficiales del partido. Como en el caso de Stalin, su palabra personal era la ley. Muchos de los dirigentes centrales fueron purgados, y algunos, como Lin Piao, asesinados.

Mao puso una pantalla entre él y el resto de los administradores experimentados (con excepción de Chou En-lai). Esta pantalla tomaba la forma de un gabinete íntimo, compuesto por parientes, partidarios personales y jóvenes nulidades que no tenían ni la más mínima base independiente en el aparato del partido. Este grupo era encabezado por su esposa, Chiang Ch'ing, y originalmente incluía también a Ch'en Po-ta, secretario personal de Mao (posteriormente purgado), que fue nombrado jefe del todopoderoso Grupo Revolución Cultural en 1966. Otros miembros eran Yao Wen-yuan, el periodista de Shanghai que supuestamente era yerno de Mao; Wang Hung-wen, a quien Mao designó tercero en importancia dentro del partido en el Décimo Congreso de 1973; y uno de los dirigentes del partido en Shanghai,

Chang Ch'un-ch'iao.

Ninguna de estas personas había jugado un papel importante en el partido antes de 1966. Su ascenso fue tan precipitado que sus críticos los llamaban sarcásticamente "los helicópteros." Estaban muy lejos de ser una fracción "radical" especial; eran, más bien, los representantes escogidos de la línea de Mao. Funcionaban como los más vigorosos promotores de sus métodos coercitivos. Como tales, nunca fueron seriamente cuestionados durante la vida de Mao por otros elementos de la burocracia, a quienes sin embargo molestaba su rudeza.

Lo que es más, conforme aumentaba la arbitrariedad de Mao, como sucedió también en los últimos años de vida de Stalin, sus emisarios especiales empezaron a ser odiados por el pueblo y a convertirse en el blanco del descontento. En la manifestación espontánea de protesta masiva que ocurrió el pasado 5 de abril en la Plaza Tien An Men de Pekín, una de las consignas de las 100,000 personas ahí reunidas era "¡Abajo la Emperatriz Dowager! ¡Abajo Indira Gandhi!" Esto iba dirigido directamente contra Chiang Ch'ing.

La historia de las breves carreras de los cuatro dirigentes purgados no revela nada especialmente "radical" ni igualitario. Analicémoslos de uno en uno.

• *Chiang Ch'ing.* Anteriormente actriz de cine, Chiang se casó con Mao en 1937, pero no tomó un papel público activo en los asuntos del partido hasta 1964. En 1965 jugó un papel central en la destitución de casi todos los principales actores, dramaturgos y directores de cine del Comité Central Dirigente de la industria cinematográfica. En mayo de 1967 se le designó, junto con Ch'en Po-ta, para encabezar el Grupo Revolución Cultural.

Jugó un papel central en la eliminación de los opositores fraccionales de Mao en la dirección del partido. Ella fue uno de los principales voceros de la retórica democratoide que utilizó el régimen para lanzar a los jóvenes Guardias Rojos contra Liu Shao-ch'i.

El acto de la Revolución Cultural por el que es más conocida es su discurso del 5 de septiembre de 1967, anunciando la directriz que daba Mao al ejército de disparar contra las "organizaciones de masas o los individuos" que se negaran a obedecer las órdenes militares. Este fue un punto decisivo para aplastar el movimiento estudiantil y obrero de los Guardias Rojos, que había rebasado las directrices del régimen y comenzaba a levantar sus propias reivindicaciones e incluso a cuestionar la sabiduría de Mao.

Después de esto, Chiang fue comisaria cultural de China, marcando la política nacional que debían seguir las películas, el teatro, la literatura, la música y, en menor medida, la educación. Su papel autoritario se puede comparar con el de Zhdanov, el secuaz servil de Stalin, que empobreció la

cultura soviética en los últimos años de la década del cuarenta.

En 1960, se publicaban en China unos 1,300 periódicos y revistas. El número se redujo a 648 al comienzo de la Revolución Cultural, y para 1973 había sido reducido a aproximadamente cincuenta. La publicación de libros se limitó a las obras de Mao, manuales técnicos, panfletos políticos del partido y unas cuantas novelas, escritas principalmente por comités, sobre "la lucha de dos líneas." La industria cinematográfica dejó de existir prácticamente, pues durante muchos años no se produjo otra cosa que películas de ocho "óperas modelo" que fueron rescritas personalmente por Chiang Ch'ing para hacerlas más "políticas."

En el campo de la educación, las universidades fueron cerradas durante cinco años. Volvieron a funcionar en 1972, y actualmente tienen menos de la mitad de estudiantes de los que había en el periodo anterior a la Revolución Cultural. El periodo de estudios fue reducido de cinco a tres años, y una tercera parte de ese tiempo se dedica a estudiar las obras del Presidente Mao. Los estudiantes son seleccionados por el partido en base a su lealtad política.

• *Wang Hung-wen.* El más joven de los dirigentes centrales del partido (tiene poco más de cuarenta años), Wang tipifica las cualidades que los esbirros de Mao intentaban cultivar en la Revolución Cultural. Hasta 1966 fue miembro de la fuerza policíaca de una fábrica de algodón en Shanghai (esto ha llevado a la prensa occidental a decir que era "obrero"). La fracción maoista lo designó dirigente del sindicato en octubre de 1966. Su mérito principal era su dureza para romper huelgas de los trabajadores de base que pedían aumentos de salarios y menos horas de trabajo.

• *Chang Ch'un-ch'iao.* Como Wang, Chang fue uno de los dirigentes de Shanghai que fue elevado a la dirección del partido por la Revolución Cultural. En aquel tiempo tenía una posición superior a la de Wang, y jugó un papel central en la derrota de los partidarios locales de Liu Shao-ch'i y en el posterior aplastamiento armado del movimiento obrero independiente que surgió a la izquierda de la fracción maoista. Después de la creación de la "Comuna de Shanghai" en enero de 1967, Chang estuvo encargado de desmantelar ese organismo relativamente democrático. El invitó al ejército a incorporarse, lo que fue utilizado para hundir a la Comuna.

• *Yao Wen-yuan.* Tsar de la prensa de Pekín a partir de la Revolución Cultural, Yao se hizo famoso en Shanghai en 1965-66 por ser el vocero más venenoso de la fracción maoista entre los periodistas durante la campaña de calumnias contra Liu Shao-ch'i por ser "agente capitalista." Durante diez años, los artículos de Yao se han contado entre los más ultraestalinistas por su hostilidad hacia la disensión de

cualquier tipo y por promover el culto a la personalidad de Mao.

Irónicamente, fue hace sólo diez años que el mismo Yao lanzó el llamado a iniciar la caza de todos los críticos del pensamiento de Mao y a "matar a golpes al perro rabioso" (Nota de Hsinhua del 31 de octubre de 1966). Hoy, el adversario de Yao que ha sucedido al "Gran Timonel," Hua Kuo-feng, entrenado en la misma escuela, llama al partido a "aplantar las cabezas de los cuatro perros."

Sobre el problema del igualitarismo, los cuatro "radicales" no son más "izquierdistas" que quienes los derrocaron, o que aquéllos a quienes desacreditaron por ser "avanzadas del capitalismo." Hasta el momento en que fueron purgados, seguían embolsándose salarios de unos 450 yuan mensuales, que es diez veces más de lo que gana un trabajador común y corriente.

En cuanto a los "moderados," ningún funcionario conocido del régimen chino ha expresado públicamente ningún desacuerdo con alguna de sus políticas. Parece ser que Hua ha logrado aislar al grupo de Chiang Ch'ing no porque tenga un programa diferente, sino porque se ha asegurado el apoyo de los administradores más poderosos y mejor atrincherados del gobierno y el ejército. Al menos esto parecen indicar las demostrativas apariciones públicas con Hua del jefe del planeamiento económico, Li Hsien-nien, y la declaración de apoyo pública que hizo el jefe militar de Pekín, Ch'en Hsi-lien.

El ascenso del mismo Hua es sorprendentemente similar al de los "helicópteros." Era virtualmente desconocido para la mayoría de los chinos hasta esta primavera, cuando fue nombrado primer ministro. Hace cinco años era un oscuro administrador provincial en Hunan. La prensa china no ha revelado cuántos años tiene, dónde nació, ni su historia anterior en el partido.

El ascenso de Hua en la jerarquía del partido se produjo en 1971, cuando fue llamado a Pekín para que ayudara a echar del partido y del ejército a los seguidores de Lin Piao. En base a esa experiencia fue elegido miembro del Politburó en 1973 y nombrado jefe de la policía secreta en 1975.

Todavía está por verse si Hua y quienes lo apoyan van a realizar cambios importantes en la política interior y exterior que heredaron de Mao Tsetung. Tampoco se sabe qué tan rápido harían esos cambios, si se dan. Ellos representan, no más ni menos que Chiang Ch'ing y Mao, una de las alas de la conservadora casta burocrática que ha usurpado el poder político de la clase obrera china. Dentro de ese marco, están bajo una presión cada vez mayor por parte de una población que es cada día más crítica.

Existen contradicciones colosales en la China posterior a la revolución y problemas urgentes que confrontan a los 800 millones de personas de esa nación: la

modernización de la agricultura, el desarrollo de la industria y la necesidad de fomentar una verdadera democracia obrera y una cultura auténtica. No es muy probable que el régimen de Hua gane

mucha estabilidad, ni siquiera con la destitución de los seguidores más íntimos de Mao.

En cualquier caso, la inquietud que existe dentro de la misma jerarquía es un

signo de debilidad. Las masas observarán atentamente el curso que sigan los dirigentes, para tomarles la medida y buscar aperturas para actuar por derecho propio. □

## Se Necesita Escala Móvil de Salarios

# Tras la Devaluación del Peso Mexicano

[El siguiente artículo apareció en el número del 20 de septiembre de *Clave*, periódico socialista quincenal que se publica en México.]

Se quebró el endeble dique de controles y medidas económicas que el gobierno promovía para evitar la irrupción de una catástrofe monetaria. El 31 de agosto, un día antes del tradicional informe anual del Presidente de la República, se anunció que el peso mexicano había sido puesto a "flotación." El 1 de septiembre, la prensa informaba que el peso estaba sufriendo una caída en más de la mitad de su precio en dólares.

La explicación oficial por la adopción de esta medida tiene muy poco que ver con la realidad. Por ejemplo, el Secretario de Hacienda y Crédito Público Mario Ramón Beteta declaró, al anunciar oficialmente que el peso había sido "flotado," que esta medida era del todo normal, que más de medio centenar de naciones practicaban la "flotación controlada." El Presidente Luis Echeverría explicó en su informe anual al Congreso de la Unión que la medida beneficiaría al país porque atraería al turismo y a la inversión extranjera.

Explicaciones como éstas tienden a ocultar lo que hay en el trasfondo del hecho, o sea, la existencia de una grave situación económica en el país.

Un aumento de precios como no se había visto en décadas siguió a la "flotación" del peso. Cadenas enteras de grandes almacenes fueron cerradas, supuestamente para evitar alzas injustificadas, aunque en realidad se trataba de una medida encaminada a prevenir una racha de compras de pánico por parte del público y así asegurar que cuando estas tiendas volvieran a abrir sus puertas los precios de las mercancías estuvieran cambiados.

Los diarios—no hay estadísticas oficiales hasta ahora—anunciaron que el alza en los precios fluctuaba entre el 60 y el 100 por ciento en el Distrito Federal. Para aquéllos que viven de su trabajo la devaluación significa que la paga que llevarán a sus hogares ha sido sensiblemente mermada.

La devaluación no es otra cosa que la expresión de una grave situación económica. El 8 de agosto *Excelsior* informaba que el presidente de la Asociación Nacional de

Consultores en Mercadotecnia declaró que el 47 por ciento de la industria en México se encontraba "ociosa." Esto quiere decir que la industria está produciendo al 53 por ciento de su capacidad y es un signo del estancamiento que afecta a la economía.

Otro signo del estancamiento es el desempleo y el "subempleo" que afectan a un 40 por ciento de la población económicamente activa. El economista Luis R. Casillas, un conservador como nos indica el hecho de que ganó el premio de economía del Banco Nacional de México en 1975, en declaraciones aparecidas en *Excelsior* el 24 de agosto, estimaba que para fines de 1976 habría en México 2.5 millones de desempleados. Casillas no tocaba el número de "subempleados" que sobreviven sin empleo ganándose la vida de las maneras más diversas, pero sí tocaba lo que llamó el "estrangulamiento externo" de la economía; es decir, que el ritmo de inversión en México ha bajado substancialmente.

Esta situación de estancamiento fue coronada con el increíble endeudamiento exterior del país. México, junto con Brasil, tiene el honor de ocupar el primer lugar entre los deudores a la banca privada norteamericana. El gobierno mexicano, según el Presidente de la Comisión para la Banca y la Moneda de la Cámara de Representantes de los EUA Henry Reuss, debe nada más a la banca privada norteamericana la friolera de 5.5 mil millones de dólares (aproximadamente 112 mil millones de pesos de acuerdo al cambio actual).

El presupuesto no alcanza para pagar esta cantidad. Para pagar sus deudas, al gobierno no le queda más recurso que inflar la moneda por medio de la impresión de billetes no respaldados con reservas y por medio de emitir valores sin fondos. La inflación, que en años anteriores subió a más del 20 por ciento, en 1976 se estabilizó a alrededor del 15 por ciento.

Pero no sólo el gobierno es responsable de que nuestra moneda se encuentre en tan precarias condiciones. El déficit comercial, incrementado con la "estan-flación" y causado porque se compra del exterior—especialmente de los EUA—más de lo que se exporta, alcanzó los 729 millones de dólares sólo en los primeros tres meses de 1976. La llamada "iniciativa privada" también se endeuda y, con ella, el país

tiene que sufrir las consecuencias. La banca privada, a través de créditos y préstamos que no están respaldados, ha hecho su contribución a la inflación.

La moneda es una mercancía que, al ser minado su valor real, es adquirida a menor "precio" en el mercado internacional. Si el peso "costaba" 0.08 dólares anteriormente, ahora que su valor fue tasajeado por la situación económica "cuesta" menos.

Para bajar su precio, hubo considerables presiones por parte de funcionarios norteamericanos. Un ejemplo fue la declaración de setenta y cinco diputados en el sentido de que el régimen de Echeverría estaba conduciendo al país al "comunismo." Dos días después de la devaluación, el 2 de septiembre, uno de estos diputados, Mr. Rees, se retractó ante Echeverría a nombre de setenta de sus colegas. En realidad, a Rees y Cía. les importa muy poco si "comunismo" se escribe con "k" o con "q," o qué quiere decir esta palabra. Lo que buscaban era presionar al gobierno a actuar de acuerdo a sus intereses.

Ni los empresarios ni el gobierno están dispuestos a pagar por la situación económica. Beteta, quien habla en un tono como si se tratara del portavoz de José López Portillo [presidente electo], declara que el presupuesto que se prepara para el próximo sexenio será "austero." Esta declaración apareció en los diarios el 25 de agosto, para que unos días más tarde el mismo Beteta decretara la "flotación" (¿o les estaba llegando el agua al cuello y tuvieron que recurrir a la flotación?). Los carteles con "El Peso no se Devaluó, Palabra Cumplida" tendrán que esperar a mejores tiempos.

Como habíamos explicado en números anteriores de *Clave*, el curso por el que ha optado el gobierno es el de preparar la situación para que López Portillo reciba la presidencia en condiciones de poder mantener en cintura a la población.

Pero los trabajadores y la población que vive de su trabajo no son responsables de la situación económica y, por tanto, no tienen por qué pagar por ella.

Un aumento inmediato del 60 por ciento en los salarios y una escala móvil de éstos y de las horas de trabajo, son las únicas garantías de que el nivel de vida no sufra las consecuencias de la devaluación.

Por supuesto, es de esperarse la resistencia de los patronos y del gobierno para otorgar estas medidas. El curso que han adoptado va en sentido contrario al de otorgar reformas progresivas que alivien los golpes sufridos por el poder adquisitivo del salario; pero la última palabra no la tienen ellos, sino el poder de los trabajadores para arrancárselas. □

## Nuevos Avances en el Curso Anticapitalista de Vietnam

Por Fred Feldman

[El siguiente artículo apareció en el número del 18 de octubre de nuestra revista, con el título "New Advances in Vietnam's Course Against Capitalism." La traducción es de *Intercontinental Press*.]

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Vietnam, que estuvo forzosamente dividido durante más de un siglo por el imperialismo francés y norteamericano, hoy está unificado políticamente. La Asamblea Nacional vietnamita selló formalmente este avance el 2 de julio, proclamando la República Socialista de Vietnam (RSV), uniendo el territorio de la República Democrática de Vietnam (norte) y la anterior "República de Vietnam" (sur). La asamblea adoptó la bandera roja y amarilla con la estrella de la República Democrática de Vietnam (RDV) como el emblema del nuevo gobierno. La frontera entre las dos partes de Vietnam, que se mantuvo durante el primer año tras la liberación, ha sido abolida.

Las organizaciones a través de las cuales se realizó la larga y costosa lucha contra la dominación extranjera en Vietnam del Sur—el Frente de Liberación Nacional, el Ejército Popular de Liberación, el Partido Revolucionario del Pueblo y el Gobierno Revolucionario Provisional—se han fusionado con sus contrapartes de Vietnam del Norte.

La Asamblea Nacional eligió un gobierno para dirigir a la nación unificada. Sus figuras dirigentes eran los miembros más destacados del gobierno de la RDV. Ton Duc Thang, presidente de la RDV, continúa en este puesto en la RSV, así como el Primer Ministro Pham Van Dong, el Ministro de Defensa Vo Nguyen Giap y Truong Chinh, presidente del Comité Permanente de la Asamblea Nacional. El puesto clave de presidente del Partido Lao Dong (Obrero de Vietnam), lo continuará teniendo, como hasta ahora, Le Duan.

Otros puestos menores del gobierno están ocupados por representantes del antiguo Gobierno Revolucionario Provisional (GRP). Nguyen Thi Binh, ministra del exterior del GRP y su representante internacional más destacada, ocupa el ministerio de educación. Nguyen Van Hieu, embajador del GRP en China, es ministro de cultura.

A través de estas medidas, el estado obrero deformado que se estableció en Vietnam del Norte en los años siguientes a 1954 formalizó la extensión de su aparato político y su control sobre Vietnam del Sur. Al hacerlo, se ha encontrado frente a una enorme contradicción.



Manchester Guardian

En contraste con el norte, la economía del sur continúa siendo de naturaleza capitalista, aunque sea un capitalismo débil y quebrantado. Así, los dirigentes vietnamitas se enfrentan en Vietnam del Sur a la alternativa de coexistir con fuerzas capitalistas o completar la revolución social, destruyendo las relaciones de propiedad capitalistas y creando una economía planificada.

Si los dirigentes vietnamitas decidiesen coexistir con una economía capitalista en el sur, se alentaría la recuperación y el crecimiento de las fuerzas capitalistas. Su penetración en el gobierno y en la economía del norte se facilitaría. El terreno quedaría preparado para el derrocamiento reaccionario, en algún momento futuro, de todas las conquistas progresivas de la revolución en Vietnam, incluyendo la economía planificada en Vietnam del Norte.

Sin embargo, en realidad, Vietnam está avanzando hacia una resolución progresiva de esta contradicción, a pesar de las vacilaciones y las prácticas colaboracionistas de clase de la dirección estalinista.

Después de tolerar relaciones de propiedad capitalistas en Vietnam del Sur durante más de un año, los dirigentes se comprometieron en la reunión de julio de la Asamblea Nacional a "consolidar la dictadura del proletariado" en todo el país, por medio de la rápida destrucción de las relaciones de propiedad capitalistas en Vietnam del Sur.

El derrocamiento del capitalismo en Vietnam del Sur bajo la actual dirección estalinista planteará a las masas de Vietnam del Sur la tarea de unirse a los campesinos y obreros del norte para realizar una revolución política antiburocrática.

### Programa de Colaboración de Clases

Al llevar a cabo la reunificación política del país y dar los pasos iniciales que apuntan a la destrucción de las relaciones de propiedad capitalistas, los dirigentes estalinistas vietnamitas se han visto obligados a actuar mucho más de prisa de lo que esperaban. Además, han actuado en contradicción con el programa que han defendido tenazmente durante muchos años.

Durante la larga lucha contra el imperialismo norteamericano y sus agentes locales, los dirigentes de la RDV y del Frente de Liberación Nacional (FLN) presentaron la reunificación como un fin a largo plazo. El objetivo de la lucha armada, insistían, era el establecimiento de un régimen progresista, pero no socialista, que aceptase la perspectiva de una eventual reunificación. Mientras tanto, la coalición forjaría una alianza política y económica entre las dos mitades del país.

Esta concepción estaba estrechamente relacionada con el objetivo de los dirigentes vietnamitas de combinar una lucha militar basada en el campesinado y una alianza con fuerzas burguesas en las ciudades. Esta estrategia obstaculizaba la llamada por una rápida reunificación con el estado obrero del norte y la movilización de los obreros del sur alrededor de demandas anticapitalistas.

Un dirigente del Partido Revolucionario del Pueblo en Vietnam del Sur resumió esta concepción en una entrevista con Wilfred Burchett en 1965, que éste citó en el número del 11 de junio de 1975 del semanario radical de Nueva York *The Guardian*:

La democracia para nosotros significa una verdadera democracia popular nacional, basada en la unidad de los obreros, campesinos, intelectuales...



tales y todas las tendencias de la burguesía patriótica. Estamos realizando una revolución nacional-democrática, con la unidad de todos los sectores de la población como elemento básico. Tenemos que considerarla en dos niveles; el nivel bastante bajo que existe en la actualidad, basado en la alianza entre los obreros, los campesinos y los estratos inferiores de la burguesía, que consideramos como una especie de democracia popular; y el nivel superior, de una unidad aún más amplia, que es nuestro objetivo y que podríamos llamar una unión democrática nacional, que incluiría los estratos superiores de la burguesía.

La actual alianza democrática popular tiene que aprobar medidas que también sean aceptables para este estrato superior. Puede parecer extraño a quienes ven el asunto desde fuera, el encontrar a comunistas luchando por los intereses de la clase alta, pero comprendemos la vital necesidad de la unión nacional al nivel más alto, *no solamente durante el período de la lucha, sino también durante los años de reconstrucción en la postguerra.* [Subrayados de Burchett.]

La creación del Gobierno Revolucionario Provisional en 1969 indicó que el FLN-RDV buscaba seriamente apoyo burgués. El GRP ofreció "entrar en consulta con las fuerzas políticas que representan a las diversas capas sociales y tendencias políticas en Vietnam del Sur que están por la paz, la independencia y la neutralidad . . . en vistas a establecer un gobierno provisional de coalición. . . ."

Para facilitar la realización de tales discusiones, el GRP insistió en que "empresarios y comerciantes tienen que disfrutar de la libertad de empresa." Prometió "proteger el derecho de propiedad de los medios de producción."

Esta posición encontró su corolario en la posición del GRP sobre la reunificación con el norte. El fin inmediato del GRP era "restablecer relaciones normales entre Vietnam del Norte y Vietnam del Sur . . . mantener relaciones económicas y culturales según el principio del beneficio mutuo y la ayuda mutua entre las dos zonas."

La reunificación, mantenía el GRP, "se conseguirá paso a paso, por medios pacíficos."

El curso de la revolución divergió ampliamente del esquema de los dirigentes del FLN-RDV. No se pudo encontrar ninguna fuerza burguesa significativa que entrase en alianza con el FLN. Las fuerzas que entraron en la alianza se quedaron en el "nivel bastante bajo" que señaló el dirigente del Partido Revolucionario del Pueblo que citamos más arriba.

Los elementos de la burguesía que se inclinaban hacia el compromiso vacilaban en romper con Washington. Los imperialistas norteamericanos, decididos a ahogar la revolución colonial en sangre, rechazaron toda propuesta de un gobierno de coalición.

Ninguna fuerza capitalista significativa de Vietnam estaba dispuesta a arriesgarse a perder la protección que le ofrecía el aparato policial-militar de Saigón, no importa cuánto se pudieran quejar de su brutalidad venal y de su resistencia a la más mínima reforma.

Los Acuerdos de París de enero de 1973 no cambiaron esta situación. A pesar de las disposiciones que llamaban a un "Consejo de Reconciliación y Concordia Nacional" tripartito, Thieu emprendió ofensivas militares masivas contra las zonas liberadas. Contaba con la amenaza de una invasión militar de los Estados Unidos para impedir que la RDV acudiese en ayuda de los sitiados luchadores del sur.

Sin embargo, la RDV no retiró su ayuda material a los luchadores del sur, aunque durante un tiempo intentó trasladar el énfasis hacia la recuperación económica del país. El sentimiento contra la guerra entre el pueblo norteamericano, intensificado por las revelaciones de Watergate, impidió a Nixon, y más tarde a Ford, hacer posteriores escaladas en la guerra.

El número del 6 de junio de 1975 de *Far Eastern Economic Review* informaba: ". . . en una reunión secreta realizada en Hanoi durante el mes de julio [de 1974], se dijo a periodistas de países amigos que el Acuerdo de Paz de París de enero de 1973 había fracasado y que había comenzado la tercera guerra de Indochina."

#### Los Meses Finales

El papel de las fuerzas de la RDV se hizo más importante conforme se intensificaba la lucha. Esto se debió en parte al hecho de que las fuerzas militares y los cuadros del FLN, aún conservando amplio apoyo en el campo, habían sufrido muchas bajas como resultado de las ofensivas de 1968 y 1972, y el programa de asesinatos "Phoenix" de la CIA.

El relato del General Van Tien Dung, jefe del estado mayor del ejército de la RDV, publicado recientemente, proporciona información valiosa acerca de los últimos meses de la guerra. Según Dung, la decisión de emprender una ofensiva se tomó a principios de 1975.

Ese mismo año, una campaña inicial que consistía sobre todo en ataques por sorpresa, debía ser seguida por una ofensiva a fondo, que se esperaba resultase en una victoria militar en 1976.

Para sorpresa de las fuerzas rebeldes, los primeros asaltos produjeron la desintegración del ejército de Thieu. Ante la oportunidad que presentaba el colapso del ejército de Saigón, los dirigentes vietnamitas decidieron poner fin a la larga guerra, en sus propios términos. Decenas de miles de soldados de la RDV cruzaron la frontera para contribuir a la liberación de Kontum, Hue, Danang y otras ciudades.

Hasta el último momento, la posición del FLN-RDV dejaba la puerta abierta para las alianzas gubernamentales con dirigentes burgueses que aceptasen el cambio en la relación de fuerzas. La burguesía prefirió aferrarse al clavo ardiendo que era el aparato tambaleante de Thieu.

Duong Van Minh, el general supuestamente neutralista que tomó posesión de su cargo en los últimos días del viejo régimen,

llamó a sus tropas a no perder terreno contra las fuerzas del FLN-RDV a la vez que intentaba estimular a los policías y burócratas de la dictadura en Saigón. Minh solamente se rindió cuando quedó claro que los luchadores de la liberación estaban preparándose para irrumpir en Saigón.

La RDV y el FLN ganaron una aplastante victoria militar sin conseguir el que ha sido su objetivo político durante largo tiempo: llegar a una alianza con un sector "progresivo" o "patriótico" de la burguesía vietnamita. Cuando fue derribado el viejo régimen, muchos capitalistas y políticos burgueses vietnamitas fueron al exilio, mientras que otros trataron de conservar lo que tenían.

El poder político y militar después del 30 de abril de 1975, quedó totalmente en manos del partido estalinista Lao Dong, que inmediatamente absorbió a la organización del sur, el Partido Revolucionario del Pueblo. Sus únicos aliados en el FLN eran algunos simpatizantes pequeño-burgueses del Lao Dong. A los ojos de todos los sectores de la burguesía vietnamita, las profundas raíces del FLN en un movimiento campesino masivo y sus lazos íntimos con el estado obrero del norte, lo descartaban como socio para un régimen viable de colaboración de clases, a pesar de las ofertas hechas por los dirigentes estalinistas.

No puede haber duda de que los dirigentes del FLN y de la RDV, al tomar el poder político en Vietnam del Sur, se enfrentaron a graves problemas económicos y sociales en ambas partes del país. Estas condiciones no se podrían superar rápidamente sin infusiones masivas de ayuda técnica y económica del extranjero.

#### Un País Devastado

Millones de toneladas de bombas de los Estados Unidos habían devastado las áreas rurales de Vietnam del Sur y virtualmente toda la RDV. La agricultura ha sido gravemente desorganizada. De ser un importante exportador de arroz, Vietnam ha pasado a importarlo.

Hoy, la restauración de la agricultura—indudablemente la primera prioridad para el nuevo régimen—requiere el difícil trabajo de llenar y plantar de nuevo veintiséis millones de cráteres de bombas. Los vietnamitas aún pierden sus vidas dragando, desmantelando y desactivando miles de bombas y proyectiles de artillería sin detonar que inundan el campo.

Millones de campesinos se vieron obligados a emigrar a las ciudades desde las áreas rurales por el bombardeo y las expediciones de rastreo-destrucción de los Estados Unidos. En otras áreas, particularmente, donde el FLN tenía fuerte apoyo, la población había estado viviendo en túneles durante una década. En un viaje a través de estas regiones destrozadas, Jean Lacouture observó la complexión "pálida,

troglodita" de los habitantes, muchos de los cuales experimentaban regularmente la luz del Sol por primera vez en muchos años.

Las ciudades, inundadas de refugiados procedentes del campo y ocupadas por fuerzas militares extranjeras, sufrieron una profunda distorsión en su vida económica. Cientos de miles de personas se vieron obligadas a ganarse la vida al servicio de la burocracia de Saigón o de los ocupantes norteamericanos.

Las nuevas autoridades hicieron enérgicos esfuerzos para devolver los refugiados a sus aldeas o para instalarlos en "nuevas zonas económicas," como se llama a las áreas bombardeadas y despobladas del campo.

Alrededor de un millón y medio de personas han vuelto al campo hasta ahora. A cambio de las duras condiciones de vida y del trabajo agotador que les esperan, el gobierno les ha ofrecido la propiedad de pequeñas parcelas de tierra.

La ocupación norteamericana no solamente llevó la destrucción a la tierra de un pueblo ya empobrecido, sino que también ha dejado una herencia de enfermedad. Se ha informado de la presencia de malaria y de brotes de peste bubónica. En las ciudades, las enfermedades venéreas afectan a un porcentaje considerable de la población. La provisión de antibióticos y otras medicinas es escasa y hay muy pocos médicos.

Por todo el país, cientos de miles de ciudadanos civiles y veteranos de guerra parálíticos y mutilados necesitan asistencia urgente. Hay que auxiliar a decenas de miles de huérfanos.

Muchos de estos problemas se agudizaron después de la caída del régimen títere. La actividad económica llegó a un punto muerto cuando las fábricas cerraron. Algunas fueron cerradas por sus propietarios cuando huyeron de Vietnam; otras eran plantas de procesamiento que requerían materias primas procedentes de los Estados Unidos y otros países. El embargo comercial impuesto por Washington tras la liberación ha contribuido a bloquear la restauración de la producción en algunas de estas fábricas. Con el colapso del ejército y la burocracia de Saigón, el desempleo en el sur aumentó inmediatamente de un millón a 3.5 millones.

Se ha prestado menos atención al impacto económico de la guerra en el norte. Aunque la desorganización social ha sido menos severa que en el sur, debido al espíritu revolucionario del pueblo y a las ventajas de una economía planificada, el desarrollo económico y el nivel de vida de la población fueron golpeados duramente. Las ciudades de Vietnam del Sur estaban fuera de los límites de los bombarderos norteamericanos (a excepción de breves periodos durante las ofensivas del FLN de 1968 y 1972), mientras que las ciudades de la RDV eran blancos primarios. Excepto Hanoi y Haiphong, los centros urbanos de Vietnam del Norte fueron bombardeados

hasta dejarlos a ras de suelo.

En el número de *Far Eastern Economic Review* del 13 de febrero de 1976, Nayan Chanda, un periodista hindú, escribió:

El precio que ha pagado Hanoi por su victoria política y militar, ha sido la regresión económica: la guerra ha retrasado el calendario económico en casi una década. En 1973, cuando terminó la guerra en el norte, la producción de los principales sectores de la economía se mantenía al nivel de la de 1965, año en que Estados Unidos comenzó a bombardear Vietnam del Norte; alrededor del 70% de las industrias medianas y pesadas ha sido dañado o destruido; cientos de miles de personas se han quedado sin hogar; los caminos, los puentes y las vías férreas estaban hechos pedazos; y el área cultivada descendió por debajo del nivel de 1965. Mientras tanto, la población ha continuado creciendo, añadiendo cada año 600,00 nuevas bocas que alimentar.

Hasta los productos más básicos de consumo escasean en Vietnam del Norte. Durante el invierno especialmente duro del año pasado, se informó de personas que murieron de frío en Hanoi, por carecer de ropa adecuada.

Para que Vietnam progrese rápidamente en la reparación de los daños de la guerra y en la construcción de una economía próspera, es esencial una considerable ayuda del extranjero. Los otros estados obreros, que restringieron al mínimo su ayuda militar durante la agresión de los Estados Unidos, no están haciendo mucho más en la actualidad para proporcionar ayuda económica.

Esta grave situación económica y social planteó a los nuevos dirigentes tareas masivas y complejas. Por una parte, Vietnam del Sur necesitaba urgentemente una economía planificada para eliminar el desempleo, restaurar la producción, asegurar la distribución de los artículos básicos, y dar los pasos iniciales hacia la industrialización.

Al mismo tiempo, tenían que buscar urgentemente ayuda extranjera. En este punto, el amplio apoyo ganado por el pueblo vietnamita a lo largo de su heroica lucha contra el imperialismo proporcionó una poderosa palanca para conseguir asistencia tanto de los estados capitalistas como de los tacaños aliados burocráticos de Vietnam.

Hasta ahora, la dirección del Lao Dong ha intentado resolver estos problemas con métodos concordantes con su profundamente arraigada perspectiva estalinista.

Tras la caída del régimen de Saigón, estaba perfectamente al alcance de los dirigentes del Partido Lao Dong unificar al país a nivel gubernamental y movilizar a las masas del sur para realizar una profunda transformación social.

Desde el punto de vista militar, el país ya estaba unificado, con un solo ejército y un solo comando. En las primeras semanas tras la liberación, el sur estuvo gobernado por este comando en la forma del Comité Militar de Administración, encabezado por un general de la RDV, Tran Van Tra.

La tendencia hacia la rápida reunifica-

ción se fortaleció por los fuertes vínculos administrativos que se crearon entre las dos zonas. Vietnam del Sur sufría de la falta de administradores y cuadros políticos entrenados. La RDV envió decenas de miles de *can bos* (administradores profesionales) a Vietnam del Sur para que asumieran tareas gubernamentales.

A pesar de la lógica de los acontecimientos, los dirigentes estalinistas vietnamitas retrasaron la reunificación y se opusieron rotundamente a completar la revolución social en el sur, destruyendo las relaciones de propiedad capitalistas. En vez de ello, intentaron llevar a la práctica el programa de colaboración de clases del Gobierno Revolucionario Provisional.

Un funcionario de Vietnam del Sur dijo al corresponsal de la agencia UPI, Alan Dawson, el 14 de mayo de 1975: "Por lo que se refiere a la reunificación entre el norte y el sur . . . podría llevar años . . . Nuestros hermanos del norte se dan cuenta que no podemos tener inmediatamente un régimen como el del norte."

Dawson informó el 30 de mayo de 1975 que representantes de Vietnam del Norte y de Vietnam del Sur habían concluido que faltaban cuando menos cinco años para la reunificación.

En el número del 1 de agosto de 1975 de *Far Eastern Economic Review*, Malcolm Salmon citó una fórmula "muy de moda" para describir esta situación anómala: "Vietnam tiene un partido, un ejército y dos gobiernos."

La victoria militar de las fuerzas rebeldes en ausencia de aliados capitalistas minó la razón de existencia del GRP, que precisamente intentaba servir de imán para los grupos burgueses. De todas formas, el Gobierno Revolucionario Provisional tomó posesión en Saigón el 6 de junio de 1975.

Aunque los dirigentes de Hanoi seguían siendo la última autoridad, la decisión de entregar formalmente el poder al GRP era un esfuerzo por preservar la ficción de un gobierno de coalición destinado a proteger la propiedad de los capitalistas que quedaban en el país por el momento. Significaba una posposición indefinida del establecimiento de una economía planificada.

No solamente se ha tomado la decisión política de mantener dos gobiernos en Vietnam del Norte y en Vietnam del Sur, sino también dos sistemas sociales contradictorios.

En el número del 12 de septiembre de 1975 de *Far Eastern Economic Review*, Chanda demostraba que la perspectiva colaboracionista de clases de 1965 se mantenía bajo las nuevas condiciones:

(Durante el congreso del Frente de Liberación Nacional [FLN] en Saigón a finales de julio, se hizo un esfuerzo para subrayar la naturaleza amplia del nuevo régimen de Vietnam del Sur. Se hizo una llamada a los "amigos en los círculos burgueses, comerciales e industriales" a que se unieran a los obreros para promover [los] intereses del pueblo y para "asegurar al mismo tiempo sus legítimos intereses.")

Algunos observadores y periodistas occidentales atribuyeron la decisión de posponer una revolución social total en el sur al miedo a un supuesto anticomunismo de las masas urbanas del sur. Representantes del Lao Dong han fomentado esta creencia.

Un editorial en el número de abril de 1976 del periódico del partido *Hoc Tap* defendía la política de posponer la reunificación argumentando que "la población de varias regiones ha sido mantenida ciega durante muchos años."

Un año antes, en mayo de 1975, un representante había soltado el mismo estribillo diciendo a Dawson, corresponsal de la agencia UPI, que "los saigoneses han estado maleducados por los franceses y los norteamericanos durante décadas."

### Actitud de los Obreros y los Estudiantes

En realidad, las fuerzas de liberación fueron bienvenidas ávidamente por sectores importantes de la población de Saigón y de otras ciudades, particularmente en los distritos obreros y en las universidades. Esta simpatía inicial se amplió rápidamente, conforme se hizo evidente que las historias de terror sobre un inevitable baño de sangre eran fabricaciones anticomunistas. Debido a la profundidad del nacionalismo vietnamita y a las trágicas consecuencias de la división del país, el apoyo para la reunificación era, en todo caso, incluso más amplio que la simpatía por el nuevo gobierno.

En las horas inmediatamente anteriores a la liberación de Saigón y en los días que la siguieron, muchas fábricas fueron abandonadas por sus propietarios. Los obreros, generalmente bajo la dirección de los cuadros del FLN, ocuparon en muchos casos estas fábricas para evitar la destrucción de propiedades y para restaurar la producción donde fuera posible. Los comités de estos obreros tuvieron un importante papel en los primeros días, constituyendo un vínculo entre el nuevo régimen, con su débil organización en las ciudades, y la población urbana.

La posición que tomaron los dirigentes vietnamitas y los obreros de base sobre el futuro del capitalismo vietnamita, está descrita de forma vívida en el libro *Giai Phong! The Fall and Liberation of Saigon* [¡Giai Phong! La Caída y la Liberación de Saigón] de Tiziano Terzani,<sup>1</sup> un periodista italiano que simpatiza fuertemente con la revolución vietnamita. Terzani escribe:

En los primeros días, la situación en las fábricas de Saigón aún era confusa. Una declaración de las nuevas autoridades aseguró a los propietarios que "se protegerán los bienes de los fabricantes y comerciantes y éstos podrán continuar con actividades que sean de provecho a la economía nacional y a la vida de la

población." Pero en algunas empresas los obreros habían anunciado la expropiación, y en algunos casos incluso habían celebrado los primeros juicios populares contra los patrones.

Otras fábricas, como la que producía las baterías "eagle," de la que había sido accionista



NGUYEN THI BINH

la esposa de Thieu, fueron tomadas por comités revolucionarios de administración de obreros y empleados, después de que los propietarios huyeran con los norteamericanos.

Hablando técnicamente, y según una fórmula aprobada por las autoridades militares, esto significaba "tomar la administración hasta el regreso de los legítimos propietarios. Pero, ya que los propietarios no iban a volver nunca, se trataba de una forma primaria de nacionalización.

Algo similar había ocurrido también en algunas pequeñas fábricas que funcionaban con capital mixto vietnamita y chino.

Sin embargo, en muchos otros casos, el gobierno resistió las demandas de los obreros de que se expropiaran los bienes de los capitalistas. Terzani continúa:

Los cuadros que estaban en las oficinas de la calle Le Van Duyet [de la federación de sindicatos apoyada por el gobierno] sintieron fuertemente la necesidad de mantener la propiedad extranjera y de que los técnicos extranjeros continuaran en las fábricas, por lo menos durante cierto periodo. En sus discusiones con los comités de obreros, que a menudo avanzaban posiciones radicales y maximalistas, aconsejaban prudencia y precaución.

Repetían: "En primer lugar, es importante reanudar la producción," y esta consigna se imprimió con grandes letras en el *Saigon Giai Phong* [diario establecido por el Comité Militar de Administración].

Los puntos de vista colaboracionistas de

clase de Nguyen Nam Loc, miembro del Comité Ejecutivo de la federación sindical oficial, también fueron citados por Terzani:

Cuando en el curso de una discusión, un obrero preguntó por qué no deberían ser expropiados los empresarios, Loc contestó:

"Ahora no es el momento. Precisamente ahora es una cuestión de educar a los propietarios. Tenemos que hacerles comprender que sus ganancias vienen de los obreros y que deberían distribuirse más equitativamente. Queremos alentar la empresa, no desanimarla. Esto es tan importante en este momento como consolidar el poder popular."

La política de mantenimiento del capitalismo durante cierto tiempo en Vietnam del Sur no estaba justificada por el supuesto conservadurismo de las masas de Saigón. Por el contrario, la trayectoria que tomó el Partido Lao Dong puede haber estado motivada en parte por el temor hacia las iniciativas que pudieran tomar los obreros, que podrían ir mucho más lejos que los objetivos de los estalinistas. Es posible que este miedo haya sido especialmente fuerte en los primeros meses del régimen, en que el aparato burocrático en el sur solamente estaba empezando a organizarse y las masas estaban llenas del entusiasmo de la victoria.

La política de mantener y propiciar el capitalismo se mantuvo durante todo el primer año del nuevo régimen, a pesar de la mala condición del capitalismo vietnamita. Según el número del 6 de junio de 1975 de *Far Eastern Economic Review*, se avisó a varios importantes empresarios franceses que "se pediría a algunas firmas francesas que permanecieran indefinidamente en el país. Encabezando la lista elaborada por el GRP estaban la Michelin y otras plantaciones de caucho en las provincias de Dau Tieng y Tay Ninh."

Un artículo en el *New York Times Magazine* del 25 de abril de 1975 describía los resultados de esta política en el distrito Son My Tay de las afueras de Saigón:

[Son My Tay] tiene un gran número de plantas industriales, incluyendo cuatro plantas textiles de algodón, una refinera de azúcar, un productor de drogas nativas, una fábrica de hielo y algunos pequeños comercios, principalmente de carácter familiar, de comida, carpintería, reparaciones, y similares. . . . Excepto una planta, todas las industrias del distrito eran de propiedad privada bajo el régimen anterior, y continuaban siéndolo."

El ritmo de la reforma agraria está en consonancia con este enfoque general. Chanda escribió en el número del 11 de junio de 1976 de *Far Eastern Economic Review*:

. . . funcionarios del sur insiten en que excepto en el caso de "terratenientes traidores" no se ha expropiado ninguna de las tierras en exceso. Cuando se les preguntó acerca de Ba Kim, uno de los pocos terratenientes de la aldea de Nhi Qui, en el delta del Mekong, las autoridades locales respondieron que aún poseía su tierra, pero que recibía una renta mucho menor de los campesinos. . . .

En contraste con el delta del Mekong, donde la

1. *Giai Phong! The Fall and Liberation of Saigon*. Tiziano Terzani, St. Martin's Press, New York, 1976.

falta de tierras no ha sido un problema, en las provincias costeras de Binh Dinh y Quang Ngai (en la actualidad fusionadas con el nombre de Ngai Binh), se ha realizado una reforma agraria de largo alcance. . . .

En el número del 30 de abril de 1976 del *Washington Post*, Chanda sacaba una conclusión de la que se han hecho eco virtualmente todos los periodistas que han observado la trayectoria económica de Vietnam del Sur desde la liberación: "En parte como resultado de la aproximación gradualista, en parte por una seria falta de administradores entrenados, las fuerzas del mercado continúan siendo las que dominan la economía."

Chanda predijo que esta situación no podría durar indefinidamente: "Es necesario considerar como una fase pasajera la contradicción que existe actualmente entre los ideales del socialismo que se han planteado para todo el país y la continuación, aunque sea subordinada, de la existencia de la antigua estructura socio-económica."

#### Oferta de 'Coexistencia Pacífica' a Cambio de Ayuda Económica

Buscando la ayuda económica que necesitan desesperadamente, los nuevos dirigentes de Vietnam han ofrecido la "coexistencia pacífica" a los Estados Unidos y a sus clientes en la región. En lenguaje estalinista, esto incluye apoyo político a gobiernos contrarrevolucionarios.

En el pasado, esta política traidora condujo a la RDV y a los dirigentes del FLN a apoyar las amplias represiones del régimen de Bandaranaike contra la juventud radical de Sri Lanka en 1971, al gobierno burgués del Movimiento de las Fuerzas Armadas en Portugal, y a otros regímenes que declaraban verbalmente simpatía con la lucha por la libertad de Vietnam del Sur.

Pham Van Dong enunció la política del régimen hacia los Estados Unidos en Hanoi el 3 de junio de 1975, tres días antes de que el GRP tomara oficialmente el poder en Saigón.

Dirigiéndose a la sesión de apertura de la Asamblea Nacional de la RDV, el primer ministro pidió que Washington se plegase a las provisiones de los Acuerdos de París (respaldadas por promesas privadas del Presidente Nixon) que obligaban a los Estados Unidos a contribuir a la reconstrucción de Vietnam. Dong continuó:

Sobre esta base, y sobre el principio de la igualdad y el beneficio mutuo, el gobierno de la República Democrática de Vietnam (norte) normalizará sus relaciones con los Estados Unidos en el espíritu del Artículo 22 del acuerdo de París sobre Vietnam y negociará los problemas restantes con los Estados Unidos. . . .

Estamos dispuestos a establecer y desarrollar relaciones en todos los campos con todos los países del mundo. . . sobre la base del beneficio y el respeto mutuo por la independencia y la soberanía de cada uno, y la coexistencia pacífica.

El Departamento de Estado de los

Estados Unidos rechazó esta apertura, describiendo cínicamente como "irónica" la petición de ayuda de una nación que los imperialistas norteamericanos habían tratado de destruir. Más tarde, Kissinger modificó ligeramente esta posición, manteniendo que la respuesta dependería de la "conducta" de Vietnam hacia el imperialismo y sus aliados en el sudeste asiático. Mientras tanto, Washington continuó negando el reconocimiento diplomático al nuevo gobierno y vetando la entrada de Vietnam a las Naciones Unidas.

Los estalinistas vietnamitas señalaron claramente las ventajas de la "coexistencia pacífica" cuando Hanoi alabó el golpe reaccionario de la Primera Ministra de la India, Indira Gandhi, en 1975.

Durante los primeros meses después de la toma del poder, los dirigentes vietnamitas pidieron que Tailandia y otros estados capitalistas vecinos eliminasen las bases militares estadounidenses que pudieran ser utilizadas contra Vietnam.

En la actualidad, Hanoi ha establecido relaciones diplomáticas con Filipinas y Malaysia, mientras que las relaciones con Singapur y Tailandia se han descongelado un poco.

Chanda, el corresponsal de *Far Eastern Economic Review*, escribió en el número del 23 de julio:

. . . Hanoi ha mostrado pragmatismo al modificar su anterior posición de "ninguna relación hasta la retirada de las bases norteamericanas" por la tolerancia de las bases si no están dirigidas contra Vietnam (fue sobre estos términos que estableció relaciones diplomáticas con Filipinas).

Chanda señaló el "alivio que se sintió en las capitales del sudeste asiático cuando Hanoi detuvo sus ataques verbales contra la ASEAN [Association of Southeast Asian Nations—Asociación de las Naciones del Sudeste Asiático] y los regímenes 'neocoloniales' de la región, y expresó en vez de ello su interés en desarrollar una cooperación significativa. . . ."

Haciendo aún una concesión más a las condiciones impuestas por Kissinger, la delegación vietnamita a la Conferencia de Países No Alineados celebrada en agosto de 1976 adoptó un tono circunspecto hacia los Estados Unidos. Aunque estas acciones no parecen haber alterado aún la posición de Washington, impulsaron a los directores del *New York Times* a declarar el 4 de septiembre:

Se podría decir que la refrescantemente independiente, moderadamente proamericana posición de Vietnam en las reuniones del Tercer Mundo realizadas el mes pasado en Colombo, donde los ataques rabiosos hacia los Estados Unidos parecían el juego de salón favorito, merece reconocimiento y aliento.

La política social adoptada por los vencedores en Vietnam es coherente con su intento de conseguir la "coexistencia pacífica" en el campo internacional. Retrasando todo lo posible el derrocamiento del capitalismo en el sur, la dirección vietna-

mita indicó su voluntad de coexistir con el capitalismo en otras partes. Además, tal vez hayan concebido la esperanza de que la protección de los intereses capitalistas daría confianza a los posibles inversionistas extranjeros sobre la determinación de los nuevos dirigentes de proteger las inversiones futuras.

Describiendo la perspectiva para Vietnam del Sur en un importante discurso el 15 de mayo de 1975, Le Duan proyectó la creación de "un buen régimen nacional democrático, una próspera economía nacional democrática" en el sur.

Este proyecto estaba en la línea de la teoría de la revolución por etapas que los estalinistas vietnamitas han defendido durante mucho tiempo. La teoría llama a un largo periodo de desarrollo "nacional democrático" guiado por un gobierno de coalición, un régimen que se supone está suspendido entre el capitalismo y la dictadura del proletariado. Los acontecimientos en Vietnam han expuesto de nuevo esta línea colaboracionista de clases.

La "etapa" de "próspera economía nacional democrática" en Vietnam, ha demostrado ser un periodo de estancamiento económico, particularmente en las ciudades. Alrededor de 3.5 millones de personas, en una población de 21 millones, continúan estando sin empleo. La magnitud del desempleo hace imposible que el gobierno combata eficazmente males como el crimen y la prostitución.

Aunque el racionamiento ha evitado el hambre, el nivel de vida en las ciudades ha empeorado bajo el impacto del desempleo y la inflación. Los precios del arroz, del combustible y otras mercancías han aumentado mucho. Los empresarios intentaron obtener las máximas ganancias de esta difícil situación por medio de actividades en el mercado negro, la manipulación de la moneda, la falsificación, y el acaparamiento de mercancías.

Según empeoraba la situación económica y crecía el descontento popular, el nuevo gobierno tomaba medidas contra los sectores más odiados de los capitalistas. Las intensas presiones que empujaron a los dirigentes a dar estos pasos anticapitalistas las describió el primer ministro del GRP Huynh Tan Phat en una entrevista con Wilfred Burchett que se publicó en el número del 10 de octubre de 1975 de *Far Eastern Economic Review*:

Tenemos muchísimas dificultades, y nuestros enemigos las han explotado para sembrar la disensión y para dirigir el descontento contra nosotros sobre los precios y la escasez de alimentos. Hay que admitir que no tenemos ninguna organización real para llevar los asuntos económicos, como tampoco la tenía el régimen títere. . . .

Todo estaba en sus manos [de los *compradores*]. Alteraban los mercados, creaban artificialmente la escasez y mantenían los precios en una

2. *Comprador* es un término que se aplica a los altos cuadros de administración de compañías extranjeras, nativos de los países asiáticos.

espiral ascendente, y había muy poco que nosotros pudiéramos hacer al respecto. Controlaban todo, desde la compra, transporte y distribución de virtualmente todas las mercancías. . . . Obviamente, a los *compradores* les convenía que fracasara nuestro régimen, y probablemente incluso soñaban con la posibilidad de que fuera reemplazado por un régimen reaccionario. . . .

El 30 de agosto fueron cerrados todos los bancos, excepto el Banco Nacional de propiedad del gobierno. Poco después se estableció una nueva moneda.

El 11 de septiembre de 1975, Phat lanzó un programa de catorce puntos dirigido a "los capitalistas *compradores* que han monopolizado y acaparado ilegalmente mercancías, y desorganizado los mercados." Fuerzas armadas de seguridad allanaron las casas de una docena de las familias más ricas en el distrito de Cholon, en Saigón, y capturaron considerables cantidades de mercancías ocultas. La propiedad de estos *compradores* fue nacionalizada.

#### Apoyo Popular a las Medidas Anticapitalistas

El entusiasmo que desataron estos pasos, indicó que las masas de Saigón estaban ansiosas de medidas anticapitalistas dirigidas a poner en marcha la estancada economía. Wilfred Burchett escribió en el *Far Eastern Economic Review* del 17 de octubre de 1975:

A la hora en que muchas personas se dirigían a su trabajo, obreros, negociantes, amas de casa y otros desfilaron por las calles con pancartas que pedían castigo para los acaparadores y los que se estaban aprovechando de la situación, una limpieza general del sistema de mercado, y control de los precios. Una gran procesión de alrededor de 8,000 personas, compuesta por delegados de la mayoría de los sindicatos, desfilaron por la zona del mercado central gritando consignas, mientras los comerciantes se asomaban cautamente detrás de los escaparates.

Otros grupos, que obviamente procedían de las partes más pobres de la ciudad, invadieron el centro comercial exclusivo de la que se conocía como la zona europea. . . . Entre los manifestantes más combativos estaban los obreros y negociantes chinos del centro de Cholon, el sector de Saigón donde viven cerca de la mitad del millón de chinos que habitan en Vietnam.

El General Ma Chi Tho, vicecomandante del Comité Militar de Administración (que continuó funcionando después que el GRP asumió el poder), intentó calmar el miedo a que estas medidas significasen el fin del capitalismo en Vietnam del Sur. Burchett informaba:

Dijo que había una distinción muy clara entre los capitalistas *compradores*, que siempre habían estado al servicio de intereses extranjeros, y los capitalistas "nacionales" que habían sufrido a manos de los *compradores* y los intereses extranjeros. Los últimos jugarían un papel importante en la reconstrucción económica del país, pero el papel principal sería del estado.

Posteriormente a esta crisis, la Conferencia Política Consultiva sobre la Reunificación Nacional se celebró en Saigón en

noviembre de 1975. Esta conferencia llamó a elecciones para el mes de abril de 1976, con el propósito de crear una sola Asamblea Nacional para todo el país, lo que fue un gran paso adelante en la reunificación.



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La "campaña contra los *compradores*" debilitó aún más a los capitalistas. Sin embargo, no se produjo ningún cambio fundamental en la política económica, aunque Truong Chinh y otros hablaron sobre la importancia de avanzar más rápidamente hacia el socialismo. A pesar de las reformas económicas de septiembre de 1975 y los pasos acelerados hacia la reunificación, la economía siguió teniendo graves problemas. Chanda informaba en el *Washington Post* del 30 de abril de 1976:

A pesar de algunas enérgicas medidas contra grandes hombres de negocios de Cholon, . . . parece que una gran parte de la comunidad de negociantes ha sobrevivido a la reforma monetaria de septiembre pasado, dispersando rápidamente sus propiedades. Tampoco ha sido posible descubrir sus depósitos ocultos de mercancías.

Después de una calma inicial de varios meses, Cholon está de nuevo muy activo. El acaparamiento y el mercado negro, combinados con una escasez general de las mercancías que importaba anteriormente el país, han producido un aumento de precios. La industria de Saigón, que dependía en gran medida de materias primas importadas, está ahora en calma. . . .

Richard Nations escribía desde Bangkok en el *Financial Times* de Londres del 24 de agosto de 1976:

La escasez de mercancías esenciales es crónica. Los desempleados consiguen ganarse la vida haciendo cola durante horas en las tiendas de racionamiento y vendiendo después sus raciones en el mercado abierto, donde los precios son mucho más altos que los controlados. Los

antibióticos apenas existen, más que en el naciente sector "por debajo del mostrador."

En el mercado negro se venden los dólares a tasas de cambio diez veces superiores a las oficiales, y los diamantes se venden al doble de su precio en el mercado mundial. Los ricos continúan viviendo cómodamente, aunque sea a base de la desinversión.

Para empeorar las cosas, Vietnam sufrió un retroceso en la producción agrícola este año, porque la sequía arruinó las cosechas de primavera y verano. Para asegurar un aprovisionamiento suficiente de agua para el campo y de comida para las ciudades, las autoridades están intentando organizar a los campesinos en equipos de "intercambio de trabajo," una etapa primaria del desarrollo de cooperativas.

A pesar de la sequía, Vietnam ha realizado avances impresionantes hacia la restauración de la agricultura, aunque éste promete ser un proceso largo y difícil. Por todas partes se están reconstruyendo puentes, canales y obras de irrigación, se están rescatando y reacondicionando los terrenos destruidos y se están construyendo nuevos caminos.

#### Giro Político hacia una Economía Planificada

Los primeros pasos hacia la reorganización de la producción agrícola en una base cooperativa, aumentaron la presión sobre el gobierno para que avanzara hacia realizar una reforma agraria más profunda y hacia establecer una producción industrial planificada en las ciudades. Las tensiones sociales que genera el amplio desempleo en las ciudades, también son una presión sobre los dirigentes en este sentido.

Las posibilidades de cooperación a largo plazo con los capitalistas que permanecieron en el país sufrieron un duro retroceso cuando un pequeño grupo de católicos tomó una iglesia, aparentemente en solidaridad con elementos derechistas que habían estado intentando aferrarse al aparato eclesiástico, enfrentándose a disparos con las fuerzas de seguridad de Saigón el 13 de febrero de 1976. Aunque la jerarquía eclesiástica los denunció inmediatamente, el incidente fue un aviso de que aún puede haber fuerzas procapitalistas, aunque débiles, dispuestas a sacar ventaja de la continua dislocación social.

Las peticiones de Vietnam para conseguir ayuda extranjera han tenido algún éxito, pero esto no ha puesto fin a la crisis en la economía urbana, que no está planificada. Capitalistas franceses, japoneses y de otros países, han insinuado interés en participar en el desarrollo de los recursos petrolíferos de la plataforma continental de Vietnam. Sin embargo, no parece que en el futuro próximo vaya a haber una inversión extranjera masiva. La economía capitalista de Vietnam del Sur, desorganizada, aislada y en situación de estancamiento, a la vez que estrechamente vinculada con la economía nacionalizada y planificada del norte del país, no ofrece

ni la estabilidad ni las posibilidades de ganancia que buscan los inversionistas capitalistas.

En mayo comenzaron a aparecer signos de un nuevo giro profundo en la política económica. Vo Van Kiet, presidente del Comité Popular Revolucionario de Saigón, intentó asegurar a los preocupados habitantes de la ciudad que pronto se emprendería un ataque decisivo contra el desempleo. Una emisión de la radio de Saigón, de la que informó el *New York Times* del 21 de mayo de 1976, citó a Vo Van Kiet:

Para arrancar de raíz el problema del desempleo y para convertir a Saigón en una ciudad productiva, necesitamos un cinturón de zonas agrícolas e industriales alrededor de Saigón. Para que esto sea una realidad, necesitamos dos millones de obreros del área de Saigón.

Estos obreros serán empleados en fábricas, zonas agrícolas, estaciones de electricidad, obras hidráulicas y sanitarias, centros de comunicaciones, etcétera.

Difícilmente se podría realizar una empresa de esta magnitud si la economía de Vietnam del Sur continuase siendo capitalista.

Durante la reunión de la Asamblea Nacional del 24 de junio al 3 de julio de 1976, que completó formalmente la reunificación administrativa del país y adoptó un plan económico quinquenal, Le Duan anunció:

Tenemos que eliminar inmediatamente en el sur a la burguesía compradora y los restos de las clases feudales terratenientes; emprender la transformación socialista de la industria y del comercio capitalistas privados, de la agricultura, la artesanía y el pequeño comercio a través de las medidas y pasos apropiados; combinar la transformación con la construcción, para incluir activamente la economía del sur en la órbita del socialismo; e integrar las economías de ambas zonas en un sólo sistema de producción socialista a gran escala.

#### Punto Crucial para Vietnam

Esta política representaría un punto crucial para la revolución vietnamita, la destrucción de la primacía del capitalismo en la vida social y económica de las masas de Vietnam del Sur. Marcaría un nuevo avance cualitativo, después de la expulsión de los capitalistas del poder político el 30 de abril de 1975.

Para realizar cambios de esta magnitud, el régimen tendrá que movilizar a los obreros y campesinos pobres vietnamitas en una escala incluso mayor que la que se llevó a cabo durante la campaña contra los compradores en septiembre de 1975. Solamente la clase obrera es capaz de arrebatar a los capitalistas el mando sobre las fábricas, derrotando su resistencia, desmoralizando a los seguidores que aún puedan tener y creando una base popular para un nuevo orden social.

Por esta razón, incluso los regímenes estalinistas más burocráticos y antipopulares, como los que estableció el Ejército Rojo en Europa Oriental tras la Segunda

Guerra Mundial, han tenido que apoyarse en algún grado en las movilizaciones obreras para derribar las relaciones de propiedad capitalistas.

Esto presenta, sin embargo, problemas para los dirigentes del Partido Lao Dong, ya que su régimen en Vietnam del Norte descansa sobre la exclusión de los trabajadores del poder político. Conformando conscientemente su estructura política sobre los modelos burocráticos de los regímenes de la Unión Soviética y China, los dirigentes vietnamitas han intentado proteger la posición privilegiada de la casta burocrática dominante. Los dirigentes estalinistas a quienes las circunstancias obligaron a realizar un profundo cambio social en Vietnam del Sur, temen que los trabajadores no acepten el control burocrático al deshacerse del capitalismo, y que puedan amenazar la supremacía de la burocracia. Este temor contribuye a sus vacilaciones y retrasos.

Aunque la clase obrera urbana de Vietnam del Sur no participó directamente en los enfrentamientos militares que finalmente derribaron al régimen neocolonialista, no deja de tener una tradición militante propia. Desde 1963, en que las masas de Saigón y el resto del país realizaron manifestaciones que contribuyeron a derribar a Diem, ningún régimen ha sido capaz de establecer su control totalitario sobre las masas urbanas, a pesar de la represión brutal de Thieu y sus predecesores.

Se han producido huelgas, incluso huelgas generales, y manifestaciones obreras. Estudiantes, budistas, católicos y veteranos de guerra protestaron contra la corrupción y las injusticias del régimen. Existían clandestinamente muchas tendencias políticas, y la tradición y las ideas que legaron trotskistas como Ta Thu Thau no dejaron de tener influencia. Después de haber luchado durante tanto tiempo, puede ser que las masas muestren resistencia a doblegar los cuellos bajo el yugo de la burocracia.

Una indicación de esta resistencia es la amplia crítica que existe sobre la altanería y, en algunos casos, corrupción de los burócratas. Algunas de estas quejas han conseguido llegar a la prensa de Saigón. Como respuesta a estas acusaciones, el gobierno ha emprendido una campaña de publicidad "antiburocrática" denunciando los errores de funcionarios de menor categoría. Esta campaña también se ha reflejado en el norte. Convirtiendo en chivos expiatorios a los funcionarios de menor importancia y experiencia, los dirigentes del Partido Lao Dong esperan desviar la crítica del mando dictatorial que se ejerce desde la alta jerarquía del partido y desde el sistema burocrático de gobierno en general.

Las movilizaciones contra los restos del capitalismo en Vietnam del Sur podrían minar la estabilidad del poder del Partido Lao Dong en el norte, donde el régimen se enfrenta a un descontento creciente debido al lento avance económico.

Consideraciones políticas de este tipo pueden haber sido la motivación del "observador de Europa Oriental" que dijo a Chanda que la política "pragmática" de los dirigentes vietnamitas en el sur puede haber "evitado un segundo Budapest."<sup>3</sup> La destrucción del capitalismo en Vietnam del Sur está ligada íntimamente con las tareas de la revolución política en Vietnam del Norte.

#### Temor a la Democracia Obrera

Los dirigentes estalinistas vietnamitas no han realizado hasta ahora represiones generalizadas en Vietnam del Sur. Sin embargo, sus acciones han estado en concordancia con su profundo y antiguo antagonismo hacia la democracia obrera. No han mostrado ninguna inclinación a dar a las masas una voz decisiva o, realmente, ningún tipo de voz en la conformación de la política que guía al régimen.

Los comités locales que se establecieron en mayo de 1975 tras la caída del gobierno de Saigón, están estrechamente controlados por cuadros del Partido Lao Dong y de sus frentes. Estas organizaciones le dan al Lao Dong una base de masas para realizar su política o para utilizarla contra elementos burgueses recalcitrantes, pero ni discuten ni deciden sobre la línea a seguir en el terreno político, económico o social.

Los sindicatos realizan funciones similares. Según el Padre Tu, un organizador de la Federación de Sindicatos de la Liberación, la tarea de la federación "será vigilar la vida de los obreros, forjar un vínculo con todos los niveles de gobierno" (Citado en el libro de Terzani *Giai Phong!*).

Todos los partidos políticos que existían bajo el antiguo régimen, incluyendo los partidos de oposición de la "tercera fuerza," han sido disueltos. El Comité Militar de Administración ordenó a todos los antiguos miembros de estos partidos que "registrasen sus nombres y entregasen armas, documentos y todas las posesiones, incluyendo equipos de transmisión. . . ."

Los nuevos gobernantes no han tomado ninguna medida para que las tendencias políticas ejerzan su derecho a formar partidos que apoyen la revolución, aunque critiquen o se opongan a la política del partido Lao Dong.

Las elecciones para la Asamblea Nacional que se celebraron el 25 de abril, fueron otra muestra de cómo la dirección del

3. Referencia a los acontecimientos de Budapest en 1956, que pusieron a la orden del día la revolución política en Hungría.

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Partido Lao Dong no quiere dar una voz decisiva a las masas. Se prohibieron todas las campañas electorales individuales. El periódico del ejército, *Quan Doi Nhan Dan* declaró: "Nuestra Asamblea Nacional es un bloque unido que no tendrá absolutamente ninguna fracción que represente intereses privados o regionales, ningún punto de vista contrario ni ninguna organización de oposición."

En algunas ocasiones, la política antidemocrática del régimen ha encontrado una oposición inesperada. Un ejemplo fue la respuesta que recibió una orden de la Oficina de Información y Cultura de Saigón el 15 de mayo de 1975, prohibiendo la circulación, venta y préstamo de todas las publicaciones impresas durante la ocupación norteamericana y bajo el régimen títere. Seguidores estudiantiles del gobierno saquearon librerías y residencias privadas en busca de material que estuviese bajo la prohibición. Se hicieron hogueras y se quemaron públicamente los libros prohibidos. En este momento, Terzani informa en *Giai Phong!*, "la población comenzó a protestar."

Entonces el gobierno hizo una pequeña retirada, lanzando una nueva orden que permitía los libros científicos, técnicos y las obras clásicas extranjeras "que no fuesen contrarrevolucionarios, exceptuando las publicaciones de naturaleza existencialista y corruptora." La nueva ley permitía "libros de historia sobre nuestro país que no contengan falsedades sobre la revolución."

Sin embargo, en vez de eliminar completamente la literatura que no se aprobase, el decreto del gobierno ha creado un considerable mercado ilegal de ella. Max Austerlitz escribió en el *New York Times Magazine* del 25 de abril de 1976:

Las antiguas librerías han cerrado, pero gracias a la iniciativa de algunos comerciantes emprendedores, se puede encontrar literatura para todos los gustos extendida sobre las aceras: números atrasados de Play Boy junto al U.S. News & World Report, "El Archipiélago Gulag" junto a la Encyclopaedia Britannica y un buen surtido de prácticamente todos los libros sobre Vietnam, en inglés o francés, publicados durante los últimos 30 años.

#### 'Hoc Tap'

*Hoc Tap*, o "reeducación," es otra de las prácticas de los dirigentes del Lao Dong que contradice las normas de la democracia obrera. En su forma más suave, *hoc tap* significa la asistencia a conferencias sobre el FLN, la RDV y su lucha por la independencia contra los invasores franceses y norteamericanos, junto con descripciones de los beneficios que se derivan del nuevo régimen y de su política. De esta forma, se espera que virtualmente toda la población urbana pase por *hoc tap*, que continúa hasta que se considera que cada individuo se ha arrepentido sinceramente de sus relaciones con el régimen neocolonial, si las tuvo, y que ha llegado a apoyar

plenamente los objetivos del nuevo gobierno.

Cualquiera que sea la utilidad de introducir a la población a la política y los fines de sus nuevos gobernantes, el sistema de "reeducación" tiene una tendencia intrínseca a caracterizar a toda la población urbana como manchada en mayor o menor



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grado por la asociación con el antiguo régimen de Saigón. Esto se extiende incluso a los que se opusieron activamente al régimen a través de las formas organizativas con que contaban los habitantes de las ciudades (luchas sindicales, protestas budistas y católicas, etcétera).

Inculca en las masas y en los cuadros dirigentes un sentido de la "superioridad moral" de los cuadros del Lao Dong y del FLN sobre la población urbana, que se supone estaba profundamente corrompida por la vida bajo el régimen neocolonial.

Terzani, que estaba impresionado muy favorablemente por la práctica de *hoc tap*, señala en *Giai Phong!* que las nuevas autoridades estaban "convencidas de que décadas de ocupación extranjera habían infectado y destruido la conciencia de los habitantes del sur. . . ."

Esta actitud hacia la población urbana se reflejó en el amplio uso del término "títere" para referirse a los soldados del ejército de Saigón e incluso a los más bajos empleados del gobierno, práctica que ahora el gobierno dice estar combatiendo.

Esta visión de las masas urbanas es especialmente peligrosa debido a las posibilidades que se abren con el nuevo avance de la revolución. Si bien los rebeldes campesinos bajo una dirección militar

capaz lograron minar profundamente y (con gran ayuda de la RDV) destruir finalmente el viejo gobierno, la construcción de una nueva sociedad requiere la dirección de otra clase, los trabajadores urbanos. Los conceptos que subyacen a *hoc tap* son una excusa prefabricada para ahogar las iniciativas de esta clase y para imponerle la tutela burocrática.

Los bolcheviques, bajo la dirección de Lenin y Trotsky, tenían un punto de vista diferente sobre la forma de ganar el apoyo de las masas. Sabían que la lealtad de los obreros y de los campesinos sólo se puede ganar y mantener por medio de acciones contra los terratenientes, los capitalistas y los imperialistas, y no exigiendo que las masas se arrepientan de supuestos pecados pasados ni presionándolas para que asistan a conferencias propagandísticas.

El punto de vista de los estalinistas vietnamitas también es diferente de la práctica de Fidel Castro, que dirigió la lucha de la guerrilla rural hasta la victoria. Castro se basó en el apoyo y las movilizaciones de las masas urbanas. No las consideraba sospechosas porque no pudieran dejarlo todo y unirse a su ejército en el campo o en la clandestinidad. No veía a las masas urbanas con miedo o con sospecha; no representaba una casta burocrática hostil a los intereses básicos de las masas urbanas.

#### 'Reducción Colectiva'

La forma más severa de *hoc tap* es la "reducción colectiva" en campos situados en las regiones del norte de Vietnam. Parece ser que este tratamiento está reservado principalmente para antiguos políticos de Saigón (incluyendo algunos opositores burgueses del régimen de Saigón), funcionarios del gobierno y oficiales militares del viejo régimen. En la actualidad, más de 200,000 personas han permanecido en estos campos durante un año.

Aunque indudablemente algunas de estas personas son culpables de auténticos crímenes de guerra contra el pueblo vietnamita, a muy pocos se les ha acusado de algún crimen, han sido juzgados o han resultado convictos.

Un decreto del 25 de mayo extendía el plazo de "reeducación" a tres años. Según un artículo de Bernard Gwertzman en el *New York Times* del 12 de junio de 1976. el decreto decía:

Aquéllos que hayan cometido muchos crímenes contra el pueblo y los maleantes peligrosos principales que hayan incurrido en muchas deudas de sangre con sus compatriotas, que no hagan ningún progreso significativo y que continúen mostrando una inmutable naturaleza testaruda serán llevados ante la ley por la administración revolucionaria para que reciban el castigo apropiado.

Los únicos que juzgarán si los internos han hecho "progresos significativos" o sufren de una "inmutable naturaleza testaruda" serán los jefes del monolítico partido gobernante.

En su informe publicado en el *New York*

... la extensión del periodo de detención ha hecho surgir dudas sobre la política de "reconciliación y concordia nacional" anunciada por las autoridades revolucionarias después de Gai Phong. Esto se siente particularmente en Saigón, donde casi todas las familias tienen a alguien en los campos.

#### Advierte:

Se dice que los campos de reeducación se están utilizando ahora para adaptar a las personas del viejo régimen a un nuevo estilo de vida, y de esta forma no sólo se justifican como necesarios y "positivos," sino también como solamente temporales. Sin embargo, se podrían convertir en "instituciones" permanentes donde continuarán aislados los que sean tan testarudos o "perturbados" como para oponerse a los cambios revolucionarios.

El peligro de que los estalinistas giren hacia la represión política en gran escala será especialmente grande cuando el régimen realice su promesa de actuar contra los restantes capitalistas y terratenientes.

En los países de Europa Oriental y en China, el periodo equivalente vio la imposición de estrictos regímenes policíacos, que eliminaron la estrecha libertad de disenso que se había permitido anteriormente. La tarea de reprimir a los contrarrevolucionarios procapitalistas activos se usó como pretexto para atacar los derechos democráticos con el objetivo de preservar la dominación burocrática contra las masas.

En Europa Oriental, una vez destruido el capitalismo, Stalin lanzó purgas generales dirigidas a eliminar toda posible disidencia. En 1952, cuando los maoístas comenzaron a tomar las medidas que condujeron finalmente a la eliminación del capitalismo, ordenaron el arresto y el encarcelamiento sin cargos o juicio alguno, de docenas de trotskistas.

Si los estalinistas vietnamitas realizan represiones similares, se puede esperar que las víctimas, cualquiera que sea su verdadera orientación política, serán acusadas de ser colaboradores y agentes de los imperialistas y de sus antiguos clientes de Saigón. Los disidentes de Vietnam del Norte que criticaron las prácticas burocráticas tuvieron que enfrentarse a la acusación de ser "espías y cuadros para la guerra psicológica de la camarilla EUA-Diem" y recibieron condenas de prisión para su "reeducación." (Ver Nhu Phong, "North Vietnam: Intellectuals, Writers, and Artists," *China Quarterly*, enero-marzo de 1962.)

Conforme avance la revolución vietnamita, el problema de la democracia obrera se volverá más agudo.

Por ejemplo, Le Duan ha indicado que el pueblo de Vietnam del Sur tal vez tenga que aceptar un nivel de vida más bajo durante un cierto tiempo. En vista de los graves problemas a que se enfrenta el país podría ser éste el caso, pero *no es Le Duan quien tiene que tomar esta decisión*. Es el

pueblo vietnamita quien tiene el derecho de decidir. Si se muestra que la austeridad es necesaria, ¿no se deberían cortar hasta el hueso los privilegios de la burocracia antes de que se sacrifique el bajo nivel de vida de las masas?

Los obreros y campesinos de Vietnam, en la lucha por completar la destrucción del latifundismo y el capitalismo y por establecer una eficaz planificación económica, tenderán a formar comités controlados por la base. Intentarán ejercer su derecho de debatir los problemas, de leer y escribir lo que quieran, y de formar tendencias y partidos sin interferencia oficial.

Desde luego, los marxistas-revolucionarios apoyarán sus esfuerzos para construir estos comités y para oponerse a todos los intentos del gobierno de someterles al control burocrático, como ha hecho con los comités establecidos bajo el patronato del Lao Dong.

Una de las más duras fases de la lucha puede muy bien implicar el derecho de las masas a elegir y revocar todos los cargos, demanda que se planteó por primera vez en la Comuna de París en 1871. Contra el parlamento monolítico levantado como un escaparate por el Partido Lao Dong, seguramente los obreros y campesinos presionarán por una forma soviética de gobierno.

Un régimen soviético que cuente con el apoyo entusiasta de millones de obreros y campesinos puede movilizar inmensas fuerzas humanas, uno de los requisitos para resolver los problemas de Vietnam. Este régimen, que no tendrá nada que temer del pueblo, hará todo lo posible por abrir las oportunidades educativas, impulsar el avance de la cultura y garantizar la libertad de discusión. ¡La revolución tiene que ser una escuela del pensamiento libre!

La lucha por estos derechos e instituciones de democracia obrera en Vietnam del Sur puede ayudar a inspirar a las masas de Vietnam del Norte para avanzar siguiendo líneas similares en la lucha contra el burocratismo.

La revolución vietnamita necesita urgentemente ayuda económica del mundo capitalista. Durante un cierto tiempo puede ser necesario ofrecer concesiones económicas al capital extranjero, particularmente en lo que se refiere al desarrollo de los recursos petrolíferos de Vietnam. Además, las concesiones económicas a pequeños comerciantes y al campesinado pueden volverse necesarias.

Pero estas necesidades no justifican el retraso de la dirección en destruir el capitalismo y el latifundismo en Vietnam del Sur. Es ilusorio confiar en Vietnam en el desarrollo económico a lo largo de líneas "nacional-democráticas." La historia de las revoluciones en el mundo colonial ha demostrado conclusivamente que una *economía planificada* es el prerrequisito para una reconstrucción económica rápida y equilibrada y para el pleno empleo.

La necesidad de capital extranjero tam-

poco justifica la terca adhesión de la dirección del Lao Dong a la política reaccionaria del "socialismo en un sólo país" y a la práctica estalinista de la "coexistencia pacífica" con las potencias imperialistas.

Durante los años de la Nueva Política Económica en la Unión Soviética, Lenin y Trotsky estuvieron a favor de dar concesiones temporales al capital extranjero y a la economía mercantil; pero siempre subrayaron el hecho de que la salida a la pobreza y al aislamiento económico de la Unión Soviética estaba en el camino de la revolución mundial, y en particular en la revolución socialista en los países capitalistas avanzados. No se permitía que las maniobras diplomáticas determinasen la estrategia política, las posiciones y el programa del Partido Bolchevique y la Tercera Internacional.

El Partido Lao Dong, debido a que representa los intereses de una casta burocrática cristalizada establecida en Vietnam del Norte, que ha extendido su control a Vietnam del Sur, es incapaz de establecer la democracia obrera. Para esto, es necesario un nuevo partido revolucionario, con fuertes raíces entre los obreros vietnamitas.

Los socialistas y todos los que se oponen a nuevas guerras imperialistas como la de Vietnam, tienen que mantener la demanda de que Washington cumpla su obligación de contribuir a la reconstrucción de Vietnam. Se tiene que hacer una restitución del daño que se ha hecho en Vietnam, aunque los Estados Unidos nunca podrán compensar completamente a los vietnamitas por la muerte y la destrucción que Johnson, Nixon y Ford llevaron a este pequeño país.

Además de la demanda de ayuda masiva para Vietnam, los oponentes del imperialismo deben exigir que Washington reconozca al nuevo gobierno, ponga fin al embargo comercial y salga del sudeste asiático, donde el Pentágono aún amenaza a los pueblos de Indochina. □

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